



Totally fulfilling the promise made.. Standing by the SHG women..

For the 4th consecutive year..



## "YSR AASARA"

The amount distributed directly through DBT alone under various welfare schemes to various categories of people has crossed **Rs. 2.50 lakh Crores** with present YSR AASARA assistance..

SHGs got ruined, consequent to the Previous Government's renegade on its 2014 promise of waiving the loans of SHGs to banks and asking them not to repay. Standing by the promise made in Manifesto, Jagananna Government providing relief to those **78.94 lakh** women of **7.98 lakh** shattered Self Help Groups across the State, by extending financial assistance of **Rs. 25,571 Crores** (finalized by SLBC as outstanding as on 2019 Election date) in 4 installments to the same women under "YSR Aasara" and has already credited **Rs. 19,176 Crores** in three installments.

Sri. Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, Hon'ble Chief Minister to formally inaugurate a 2 week long 4th tranche of depositing another **Rs. 6,394.83 Crores** financial assistance into the accounts of 78,94,169 women members of **7,98,395** Self Help Groups, in a festive atmosphere in Uravakonda, Anantapuram District.

With **Rs. 6,394.83 Crores** assistance being disbursed today, the total financial assistance provided by Jagananna Government so far under "YSR Aasara" is **Rs. 25,571 Crores..**



Benefits extended by Jagananna Government to women beneficiaries alone in last 56 months through various schemes..

Name of the Scheme	Women Beneficiaries	Net benefits (Rs. in Crores)
<b>DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer)</b>		
Jagananna Amma vodi	44,48,865	26,067.30
YSR Kapu Nestham	3,57,844	2,028.77
YSR Cheyutha	26,39,703	14,129.12
YSR Sunna Vaddi (SHGs)	1,05,13,365	4,969.04
YSR Nethanna Nestham	33,689	225.95
<b>YSR Aasara</b>	<b>78,94,169</b>	<b>25,570.80</b>
YSR Pension Kanuka	43,78,930	55,922.44
YSR Rythu Bharosa	22,48,220	13,985.92
YSR Free Crop Insurance	8,21,348	1,170.31
YSR Sunna Vaddi Panta Runalu	7,38,760	183.46
Input Subsidy to Farmers	5,71,210	494.11
YSR Matsyakara Bharosa	4,868	10.76
Jagananna Vasathi Deevena	25,17,245	4,275.76
Jagananna Vidya Deevena	26,98,728	11,901.00
YSR Vahana Mithra	30,736	87.97
YSR Law Nestham	2,081	14.95
MSME	14,174	1,272.72
Archakas/Imams/Mouzams/Pastors	3,865	1.89
Jagananna Chedodu (Rajakas, Tailors & Nayee Brahmins)	1,84,665	404.58
YSR Bima	68,172	1,026.66
YSR Arogya Aasara	6,25,999	388.51
YSR EBC Nestham	4,39,068	1,257.04
YSR Aarogyasri	10,41,191	3,361.30
Navaratnalu Pedalandariki Illu	21,31,564	12,295.97
YSR Kalyanamasthu/Shaad Tohfa	46,062	348.84
Jagananna Thodu (Interest)	13,83,206	64.87
<b>DBT Total</b>	<b>4,58,37,727</b>	<b>1,81,460.04</b>
<b>Non - DBT</b>		
Jagananna Thodu	13,83,206	2,610.27
Jagananna Goru Mudda	21,63,391	1,795.00
YSR Sampurna Poshana	15,35,390	2,992.08
YSR Jagananna Illa Pattalu	30,76,018	75,670.05
Land cost will be at least Rs. 2.5 lakhs to Rs. 15 lakhs, depending on the location.		
Free Tabs to 8th Class Students	3,48,554	460.85
Jagananna Vidya Kanuka	25,12,423	1,784.26
<b>Non - DBT TOTAL</b>	<b>1,10,18,982</b>	<b>85,312.51</b>
<b>TOTAL (DBT + Non - DBT)</b>	<b>5,68,56,709</b>	<b>2,66,772.55</b>

**Sri. Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy,**  
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Government of Andhra Pradesh

Jagananna Government is lending a helping hand to those women who are utilizing Aasara, Cheyutha and Sunna Vaddi schemes to create livelihood opportunities.. To facilitate this, Jagananna Government has entered into MoUs with reputed MNCS such as P&G, ITC, RELIANCE, HUL, AMUL, ALLANA, AJIO, Grameen Vikas Kendra (GVK), MAHINDRA & KHEYTI, TANGER, AYEKART, IRMA, NIINE, KALGUDI GIAN and even with Banks to help them to excel as Entrepreneurs..

The Previous Government had pushed DWCRA Groups into debts after going back on its promise of writing off their loans on one hand and winding off of Zero-Interest loan scheme since October 2016 on the other.. Resulting in DWCRA women being forced to repay Rs.3,036 Crores as additional interest with penalty. As a consequence, "A", "B" grade SHG groups fell to "C", "D" grades and Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) grew to 18.36%..

Benefitted from "YSR Aasara", "YSR Sunna Vaddi", the SHGs have once again become active with 99.83% recoveries. NPAS and Outstanding have reduced to 0.17% today, from 18.36%...

With the encouragement of Jagananna Government, in these 56 months a total of **14,77,568** women have benefitted till date by establishing retail shops, rearing cows, buffaloes, sheep and goats and are receiving an additional income of **Rs. 7,000 to Rs. 10,000 per month**. The tie up with AMUL has increased competition in the market, thus enabling dairy farmers to receive an additional income ranging from **Rs. 10 to Rs. 22 per litre milk..**

Jagananna Government has so far provided benefits of **Rs. 2,66,772.55 Crores** through both DBT and NON-DBT to women beneficiaries alone under different schemes ..



For more details, P.T.O



For the 4th consecutive year.

# "YSR AASARA"

## Milestones of YSR AASARA

Benefit extended  
**Rs.6,318.76 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries **77,87,295**

1st Tranche  
11th September 2020

Benefit extended  
**Rs.6,439.52 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries **78,75,539**

2nd Tranche  
7th October 2021

Benefit extended  
**Rs.6,417.69 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries **78,94,169**

3rd Tranche  
25th March 2023

Benefit extended  
**Rs.6,394.83 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries  
**78,94,169**

4th Tranche  
23rd January 2024

**Total benefit extended through 4 tranches of YSR Aasara  
Rs.25,571 Crores**

Revolutionary schemes implemented by Jagananna Government for the welfare of women beneficiaries in last 56 months..



### Jagananna Amma Vodi - Changing Destinies



Annual financial assistance of Rs. 15,000 to poor and needy mothers, who send their wards to school.. The scheme is applicable to mothers of children studying from classes 1 to intermediate.

Amount distributed so far :  
**Rs.26,067 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries : 44,48,865



### YSR Sampoorna Poshana... YSR Sampoorna Poshana plus

Providing wholesome and improvised nutritious food to children aged between 6 months to 6 years, along with pregnant women and lactating mothers.. "Sampoorna Poshana Plus" for tribals..

Amount distributed so far :  
**Rs.2,992 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries : 15,35,390

### YSR Cheyutha

Jagananna government is providing financial assistance of Rs.18,750 per year to poor women from SC, ST, BC, and minorities, who are between the ages of 45 and 60. This assistance will be provided for four years to the same women, totalling Rs.75,000. The government is also providing livelihood opportunities to help them stand on their own feet.

Amount distributed so far: **Rs.14,129 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries : 26,39,703



### Navartnalu Pedalandariki Illu

Fulfilling the dream of owning a house, 31.19 lakh free house site pattas distributed to poor women.. Constructing 22 lakhs houses.. Construction of 8.6 lakh houses already completed.. To empower women, houses and house site pattas given in their names. Each woman beneficiary to receive an asset worth of at least Rs.5 lakhs to Rs.20 lakhs depending on the location..

A wealth of at least Rs.2 lakh Crores to Rs.3 lakh Crores in the possession of women beneficiaries across the State..



### YSR Aasara

Standing by the promise made in Manifesto, Jagananna Government providing relief to those 78.94 lakh women of 7.98 lakh shattered Self Help Groups across the State, by extending financial assistance of Rs. 25,571 Crores (finalized by SLBC as outstanding as on 2019 Election date) in 4 instalments to the same women under "YSR Aasara"

Amount distributed so far: **Rs.25,571 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries: 78,94,169



### YSR Kapu Nestham

Jagananna Government is extending financial assistance of Rs. 75,000 under "YSR Kapu Nestham" in 5 years @Rs.15,000 per year to eligible women in the age group of 45-60 years belonging to Kapu, Balija, Telaga and Ontari communities for their welfare and to make them self reliant..

Amount distributed so far :  
**Rs.2,029 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries : 3,57,844



Sri. Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy,  
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Government of Andhra Pradesh

### YSR Sunna Vaddi (SHGs)

Jagananna Government is bearing the Interest burden of SHG women and reimbursing the interest component of those SHGs, which obtained loans and repaid them on time, under "YSR Sunna Vaddi" ..

Amount distributed so far :  
**Rs.4,969 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries : 1,05,13,365

### YSR EBC Nestham

Jagananna Government provides financial assistance of Rs.15,000 per annum for 3 years amounting to Rs.45,000 to the same women beneficiaries belonging to Reddy, Kamma, Aryavaishya, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Velama and other EBC communities, aged between 45 to 60 years to make them Self Reliant by facilitating them set up their businesses under "YSR EBC Nestham" ..

Amount distributed so far :  
**Rs.1,257 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries : 4,39,068

### YSR Pension Kanuka

...regular disbursal of pensions on time

"YSR Pension Kanuka" for single women, widows and elderly women of above 60 years of age are provided with a pension of Rs.3,000 regularly on the 1st day of the month. The amount spent on women alone..

Amount distributed so far : **Rs.55,922 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries : 43,78,930



Jagananna Government is providing financial assistance to poor parents to perform their children's marriage in a dignified manner after their Education, through "YSR Kalyanamasthu" for the girls belonging to SC, ST, BC, Disabled, and Construction Worker Families, and through "YSR Shaadi Tohfa" for the girls of Minority communities..

Amount distributed so far : **Rs.349 Crores**  
No. of Beneficiaries : 46,062

### Political Empowerment of Women..

Enactment of Legislation to provide 50% reservations to women in nominated posts and nominated works... 51% of nominated Corporation Chairperson posts to women.. More than 50% of posts of Directors and Market Yard Committee Chairpersons and Chairmans of Temple boards to women.. 4 Key cabinet portfolios to women.. Giving top priority to women in local bodies.. More than 50% of posts of ZP Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons, Municipal Corporation Mayors, Deputy Mayors, Ward Members, Municipal Chairpersons, Sarpanches, MPTCS, MPPs and ZPTCs were given to women..

Free distribution of quality, branded sanitary napkins to over 10 lakh adolescent school & college going girls across the State at a cost of Rs.32 Crores, to reduce the dropouts.. In addition, major share is for women in various welfare schemes implemented by the Jagananna Government..

Dr. Audimulapu Suresh, Hon'ble Minister of MA&UD

Jagananna Government is a women centric Government.

Sri. Budi Mutyalu Naidu, Hon'ble Dy. C.M & Minister for PR & RD

Note: The 4th tranche of "YSR Aasara" programme will be formally launched by Sri. Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, Hon'ble Chief Minister at 11AM on 23<sup>rd</sup> January, 2024 in Uravakonda of Anantapur District. Do watch this live on all popular news channels..

Issued By: Commissioner, Information & Public Relations Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh



**YATRA DISRUPTED**  
Rahul denied entry to shrine in Assam

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DeSantis drops his bid, backs Trump

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**DEAL IS OFF**  
Sony calls off \$10-bn merger with Zee

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**DISTRIBUTION FORMULA**  
*Tax contribution by States needs to be revisited*

*It is a good measure of efficiency of a State*

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**PERSONAL REASONS**  
Kohli to miss first two Tests against England

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## NEARBY



**Metro expansion routes finalised**

### HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A.Revanth Reddy has finalised the Hyderabad Metro Rail second phase of 70 km length, connecting RGIA from four corners of the city to ensure that metro rail services are accessible to the majority of commuters in the State capital. » Page 4

**Retired DGP may head TSPSC**

### HYDERABAD

Stepping up its exercise to appoint chairman and members of TSPSC, the State government-appointed search committee on Wednesday shortlisted the name of a retired Director General of Police to head the Commission. » Page 4

# Rituals done, PM calls it a historic day

Modi performs consecration rituals inside Ram Temple's *sanctum sanctorum*

**Mayank Kumar**  
AYODHYA

The *pran pratishtha*, or consecration, of the idol of Lord Ram at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya took place on Monday, amid chanting of hymns and conduct of rituals, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other dignitaries in attendance. Mr. Modi, who participated in the ceremony, termed it a historic day, stating that it was akin to a "nation rising by breaking the mentality of slavery, drawing courage from every affliction of the past and creating a new history".

Mr. Modi, one of the *yajmans* (empowered to conduct the ritual) of the ceremony, took the *sankalp* (a resolution) for the *pran pratishtha*, and later walked inside the *sanctum sanctorum* of the temple with a silver *chattar* (metal deity) placed on a red fold-

ed sheet of cloth. The consecration rituals were performed inside the *sanctum sanctorum* by Mr. Modi, which took place during the *abhiseet muhurta* (a highly auspicious period in Vedic astrology).

After the ceremony, Mr. Modi broke his 11-day fast, which was part of his spiritual preparation for the rituals.

**'Moment of humility'**  
Later addressing a gathering of around 8,000 dignitaries and guests, the Prime Minister said "Ram Lalla" (as the deity is named) would not be in a "tent" any longer, a reference to the makeshift arrangement that had been put in place after the destruction of the Babri Masjid.

Mr. Modi said the moment was not just of "vijay" (victory) but also "vinary" (humility), and invited those who had op-

posed the Ram Temple to also come and experience the feeling.

Expressing gratitude to the judiciary for upholding the dignity of law and justice, he said the grand temple was built in a judicial manner.

"In our Constitution, in

He addresses 8,000 guests in Ayodhya, says 'Ram Lalla' will not be in a 'tent' any longer



**Holy occasion:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi leads the rituals at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on Monday. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat are present. ANI

its first copy, Lord Ram is there. Even after the advent of the Constitution, legal battles over the existence of Lord Shri Ram continued for decades. I

express my gratitude to the judiciary, which upheld the dignity of justice. The temple of Lord Ram, syn-

onymous with justice, was also built in a judicial manner," said Mr. Modi.

### CONTINUED ON

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FROM FEAR TO HOPE  
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**Stop fighting over petty issues, says RSS chief**

### NEW DELHI

Speaking after the consecration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh chief Mohan Bhagwat said in *Ram Rajya*, people should stop fighting over petty issues. He added that the event marked the break of a new dawn in India. » Page 9

**Oral orders to ban telecast are not binding: SC**

### NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday said the police and State authorities were not bound to act on any "oral orders" to ban the live telecast of *pran pratishtha* of Lord Ram at Ayodhya and conduct of pujas linked to the event.

Chinese vessel in Indian Ocean now, 'heading' to Male

**Dinakar Peri**  
**Meera Srinivasan**

NEW DELHI / COLOMBO

The Chinese research vessel *Xiang Yang Hong 03* is entering the Indian Ocean and headed to Maldives, according to Open Source Intelligence (OSINT) observers and maritime tracking portals. Official sources acknowledged the development but did not comment on it. The destination – Male – is noteworthy given the moratorium on foreign research vessels by Sri Lanka and the ongoing friction between India and Maldives over Indian troops stationed there. "Xiang Yang Hong 03" a Chinese ocean research vessel is entering Indian Ocean Region [IOR], displaying its destination as Male.

CONTINUED ON  
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- B. Arch. (5years)
- B. Tech. (Lateral Entry) (3years)
- BCA (3years)
- BBA (3years)
- Bachelor of Design (Fashion / Textile) (4years)
- Bachelor of Film & Television Production(3years)
- BA.LL.B / BBA LL.B / B.Sc. LL.B (5years)
- Bachelor of Communication & Journalism(3years)

#### Master's Programmes

- BA in Economics (Hons)(4years)
  - BA in Sociology (Hons)(4years)
  - BA in English (Hons)(4years)
  - B.A. in Psychology (Hons)(4years)
  - B.Com (Hons)(4years)
  - B.Sc. Computer Science (4years)
  - B.Sc. Nursing (4 years)
  - B. Pharma (4 years)
  - D.Pharma (2 Years)
- M.Tech. (2years)
  - LLM(2years)
  - MCA (2years)
  - M.Sc Biotechnology (2years)
  - M.Sc. Applied Microbiology(2years)
  - M. Arch(2years)
  - Int. M.Tech & Ph.D(5years)
  - Master of Communication & Journalism(2years)
  - Master in Sports & Yogic Sciences (2years)
  - Master of Hospital Administration (2years)
  - Master of Public Health (2years)
- M. Design (2 Years)
  - M.Sc. Computer Science(2years)
  - MA in Economics (2years)
  - MA in Sociology(2years)
  - MA in English(2years)
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M HY-HY

# People rejoice consecration of Ram temple in Ayodhya

Despite the physical distance of about 1,300 kilometres from Hyderabad to Ayodhya, the denizens gathered at local temples and tuned in to television broadcasts to witness the historic event.



Students taking out a procession on the occasion of Ram Lalla Pran Pratishtha ceremony in Ayodhya, in Hyderabad; Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan performing puja at Raj Bhavan and; devotees performing puja in Hyderabad. G RAMAKRISHNA & NAGARA GOPAL



**Siddharth Kumar Singh**  
HYDERABAD

**H**yderabad was awash in saffron hues on Monday as the city joined the celebratory atmosphere linked to the consecration ceremony of the Ram temple in Ayodhya.

Saffron flags adorned homes, and vehicles, from two-wheelers to four-wheelers, proudly displayed the colour, creating a saffron wave throughout the city.

Despite the physical distance of about 1,300 kilometres from Hyderabad to Ayodhya, the residents gathered at local temples and tuned in to television broadcasts to witness the historic event.

Many temples across the city were seen decorated with flowers and lights.

Nizam College grounds in Basheerbagh hosted a live screening of the ceremony organised by a political party, attracting hundreds of people from various parts of the city.

Dignitaries including Governor Tamilisai Soundararajan, Union Minister for Tourism G. Kishan Reddy, and national president for BJP's OBC Morcha, K Laxman, were also present at the venue.

As the ceremony unfolded in Ayodhya, the crowd at Nizam College grounds witnessed the *Pran Pratishtha* ceremony at 12:30, accompanied by musical performances.

The venue also hosted a photo exhibition chronicling events related to the

Babri Masjid demolition and the construction of the Ram Mandir, spanning from 1992 to 2024.

The exhibition showcased newspaper clippings and cutouts, offering a historical perspective to the attendees.

Beyond Basheerbagh, the festive spirit extended to other parts of the city.

In Tarnaka, the National Association of Street Vendors of India organised a free lunch programme in honour of the ceremony.

Several other temples

and residential colonies organised 'annadanam' or free lunch for devotees.

The students of Keshav Memorial Institute of Technology in Narayanguda took out a procession with hundreds of them dancing on the road from the College to Melkote Park and returned in the same path in the morning before the Ayodhya event.

Near the business area of Begum Bazaar Chatri, families and women in the area took out a procession in the morning.

In Abids area, members of Gujarati community took out a procession from Apsara Hotel with children and adults dancing and bursting crackers.

## Shoba yatra

Meanwhile, the main streets surrounding the historic Sri Sitaramachandra Swamy temple in Bhadrachalam resonated with the chants of "Jai Sri Ram" as an impressive Shoba Yatra was organised in the temple town.

The flower bedecked

prachara ratham of the temple was also part of the colourful Shoba Yatra.

Amid traditional drum beats and recital of keertanas in praise of Lord Sri Ram, the yatra passed through the main streets of the temple town in Bhadrachalam district.

Suvarna Pushparchana, Sankshepa Ramayana Havamnam, Sundarakanda Parayanam, Deepotsavam and other special rituals and devotional programmes marked the celebrations in Bhadrachalam, popularly known as Dakshin Ayodhya.

In Karimnagar, a sand sculpture of the replica of Ayodhya Ram Mandir drew the attention of devotees at the Maha Shakti temple in the town.

BJP national general secretary and Karimnagar Member of Parliament Bandi Sanjay took part in celebrations organised by the BJP local cadres at Telangana Chowk to mark the Ayodhya Ram Mandir inauguration in Karimnagar town.

## BJP leaders witness event live

**The Hindu Bureau**  
HYDERABAD

Telangana BJP leaders led by party president and Union Minister for Tourism, Culture and Development of Northeast Region, G. Kishan Reddy, Rajya Sabha MP K. Laxman, election campaign coordination committee chairman Eatala Rajender and others witnessed the Ayodhya Ram Temple consecration programme by Prime Minister Narendra Modi 'live' from different public places across the twin cities, including temples, on Monday.

Later, they also lit lamps and worshipped at the respective shrines while there were cultural events, celebratory gatherings towards the evening with burst of crackers and impromptu rallies at the city and State offices. Mr. Kishan Reddy first participated in the programme at the Ujjaini Mahakali Temple in Secunderabad and later at a private engineering college.

The BJP leader claimed that this was the biggest re-



Devotees in front of a 39-feet Hanuman statue in Sangareddy.  
MOHD ARIF

## Vyuham censor certificate quashed

**Marri Ramu**  
HYDERABAD

Justice Surepalli Nanda of the High Court on Monday quashed the censor certificate issued by the Central Board of Film Certification to yet to be released Telugu movie, Vyuham. The film was produced by Ramadhatta creations of Dasari Kiran Kumar, and directed by Ram Gopal Varma.

Allowing the writ petition filed by Telugu Desam Party represented by its general secretary Nara Lokesh challenging the censor certificate given to the film, the judge remitted back the matter to the CBFC's regional office in Hyderabad and the Board's Revising Committee.

The judge wanted the two respondents to reconsider afresh the matter of issuing a censor certificate, in conformity with the principles of natural justice.

ligious event in the country post-Independence which has brought people from all sections of the society together. Mr. Rajender participated in the event at temples in Alwal, Moula Ali, Malkajgiri and other places. Party spokesperson N.V. Subash said that his grandfather and former PM P.V. Narasimha Rao

would have been "very much satisfied" had he been alive.

### New Mahila president

Meanwhile, the new women's wing president, Shilpa Ali, Malkajgiri and other places. Party spokesperson N.V. Subash said that his grandfather and former PM P.V. Narasimha Rao

## GOVERNMENT OF ANDHRA PRADESH Roads and Buildings Department

No. 01/2023-24, E-Procurement tender notice Dt. 18-01-2024 Name of the Work: Improvements and Modernisation of Canal system under Sri Teneti Viswanadham Pedderu Reservoir Project near Raipalapam (V) Madugula (M) in Anakapalli Dist. Estimat Contract Value(E.C.V.) : Rs. 69.38 Crores. Bid submission closing date : From 22-01-2024 @ 5:00 PM to 06-02-2024 up to 5:00 PM. Further Details can be seen on the e-procurement market place @ [www.approcurement.gov.in](http://www.approcurement.gov.in) Sd/-Superintending Engineer, DIPR 12512/CL, Dt: 22-01-2024 W.R. Dept., Irrigation Circle, Visakhapatnam.

## Andhra Pradesh Digital Corporation Limited, Guntur Dist., AP (Government of AP Undertaking)

### Extension of BID Submission Last Date

This Notification is in continuation of RFP for engagement of Social Media Listening Services to APDC, Govt of AP (Tender No APDC/MDF/01/2024, Dated: 03.01.2024). APDC has decided to extend the last date for submission of the above tender for further revised date and time for bid submission of RFP is by 29-01-2024, 5:00 PM. All other tender conditions remain unchanged. Further details are available on our website <https://ipr.apnic.in> and <https://www.apdc.ap.gov.in>

Sd/- Vice Chairman & Managing Director, DIPR 2632PP/CL, Dt: 22-01-2024 Andhra Pradesh Digital Corporation Limited

## EAST COAST RAILWAY E-AUCTION PROGRAMME FOR MARCH & APRIL-2024

Month	DIVISION / UNIT	Date	
		March-2024	April-2024
MARCH & APRIL-2024	Depot Mancheswar Khurda Road Division Waltair Division Sambalpur Division	2, 7, 13, 20, 25 1, 6, 12, 18, 23 4, 9, 15, 21, 27 5, 11, 16, 22, 28	1, 8, 15, 22 2, 9, 16, 23 3, 10, 17, 24 4, 12, 19, 26

Condemed rolling stocks (Loco, Coach, Wagon), Scrap rail, Miscellaneous P/Way fittings (switches, crossings, fish plates, sleepers, fish bolt etc.), miscellaneous workshop scrap (drums, bogie frame, buffer casing, buffer plunger, turning and boring etc.), Miscellaneous ferrous, Non-ferrous, Non-metallic scrap, condemned machinery and plants, condemned vehicles, condemned office equipments of Sambalpur, Khurda Road & Waltair divisions and scrap materials of Railway Electricians are expected to be offered on "AS IS WHERE IS" basis. Railway administration shall be at liberty to include other items too in the e-auction and the complete details of materials and terms and conditions will be as per Auction Catalogue, which shall be available with the respective auction conducting authority of East Coast Railway or from our website [www.ireps.gov.in](http://www.ireps.gov.in) within 07 (seven) days prior to the date of auction.

PR-1012/O/23-24 Principal Chief Materials Manager, Bhubaneswar

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### CHANGE OF NAME

IN THE COURT OF HON'BLE VI ADDITIONAL DISTRICT JUDGE : R.R.DISTRICT AT KUKATPALLY O.S.NO. 83 OF 2019 Between: Smt. T.Madhavi and others ...Plaintiffs AND Mrs. Cyber Earth Estate and Developers ...Defendants

1) Mateen Ahmed Mujaddi, S/o: Aziz Ahmed Mujaddi, R/o: H.No. 10-9-282, Humayun Nagar Colony, Hyderabad-500008 (Defendant No.1)

2) Mohd., Ekram Ali, S/o: Md. Sharifuddin, R/o: H.No.8-1-364/A/16, 17, Daulat Gushain Colony, Towichowki, Hyderabad-500008 (Defendant No.5) Please note that the parties who have filed the above Suit for Specific Performance of Contract, Recovery of Amount, Cancellation Reqd., Sale Deed dt. 04-01-2016 bearing Doc. No. 1492/2016 and other Court documents (1) AGPA No. 31-9-2016 bearing Doc. No. 3776/2016, (2) Sale Deed dt. 27-09-2018 bearing Doc. No. 2661/2018 and (3) Development Agreement cum-Govt. dt. 25-10-2018 bearing Doc. No. 226/2018 for Specific Injunction against Defendants 1 to 7. As you are the Defendant No. 4 & 5 in the above suit and the summons could not be served on you, in spite of the best efforts, the Hon'ble court ordered for service of process in any way of this application. The matter is posted to 08/02/2024 for your appearance.

Therefore, you are directed to be present before the Hon'ble court on 08/02/2024 at 10:00 A.M. and file the same before the Hon'ble court either in person or through an Advocate, failing which the matter will be decided ex parte in accordance with law.

By the Order of the Court // Sd/- T.V. KALYAN SINGH ADVOCATE Plot No.57, Balaji Enclave, Transport Road, Srinagar, Secunderabad-500 009.

K.V. Pavithran Advocate for Petitioner

### LEGAL NOTICE

In the Court of the Munsiff of Kuthuparamba O.P. (S.C.) No. 2022 Nabeeso P.K & Others: Petitioners M/s. Hindusthan Unilever Ltd. & Another : Respondents Notice to second Respondent Take notice that the Original Petition is posted to 05.02.2024 ordering notice to K F Technologies Pvt Ltd, Selenite Tower-B, Plot 31-32, Gachibowli, Financial District, Hyderabad, 500032, by publication. Sd/- G. Sreenivasa Rao Chief Engineer/Civil/Thermal, TSGENCO DIPR NO: 869-PPCL-Agency/Advt/1/2023-24, Date: 22-01-2024

## All India Institute of Medical Sciences Vijaypur, Jammu 184120

### NOTICE INVITING TENDER (NIT) FOR SUPPLY OF MEDICAL GASES SERVICES TO AIIMS, VIJAYPUR JAMMU

1. Notice Inviting Tender (NIT) for Supply of Medical Gases Services to AIIMS, Vijaypur, Jammu has been published in CPP Portal, GOI on 19th January, 2024. Vide tender Reference No AIIMS/JMU/NIT/2024/2 and Tender Id No 2024\_AIMSJ\_742408\_2 Bidders/owners interested to provide the services may please download NIT document from CPP Portal, GOI ([https://www.eprocure.gov.in/epublish/app](http://www.eprocure.gov.in/epublish/app)). or website of AIIMS, Jammu ([https://www.aiimsjammu.edu.in](http://www.aiimsjammu.edu.in)).

2. Any Bidder/owner who is unable to download the NIT document may collect the same (Hard copy) from office of the Dy. Director (Admin) located at GMC Doctor's Guest House, Maheshpura Chowk, Jammu-180001 during working Hours (9.30 AM to 5.30 PM).

Deputy Director (Admin)  
AIIMS, Vijaypur, Jammu

Caught for smuggling heroin at RGIA

**The Hindu Bureau**  
HYDERABAD

A woman passenger who arrived from Lusaka, Zambia, was detained at the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport for smuggling 5.92 kilograms of heroin on Saturday.

Officials said that she had the contraband concealed in her hand bag. She was travelling to Singapore via Hyderabad.

# Housing applicants flood GHMC headquarters during Prajavani

**The Hindu Bureau**  
HYDERABAD

Majority of the complaints received by the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) headquarters during its first ever 'Prajavani' grievance redressal programme post-COVID on January 22, pertained to housing.

A statement from the GHMC has informed that of the 86 petitions received during the



Representational picture

programme attended by Mayor Vijayalakshmi and Deputy Mayor Srilatha Shoban Reddy, 62 were related to the

double-bedroom housing. Sources informed that several applicants sought housing units under the 2BHK scheme, while a few came with complaints about the units they received. A few beneficiaries from Ahmedguda complained of cracking walls and lack of amenities. Several others complained about lack of power, water and other facilities. The Mayor asked the beneficiaries not to get into the traps of per-

sons masquerading as GHMC officials and seeking bribes for clearing power and water connections through online payment apps. The beneficiaries need to apply for power and water connections in the respective local offices attaching the title certificate issued by the government, she said.

Ms. Vijayalakshmi asked the officials to issue a receipt for every complaint and resolve it within a week's time.

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## APPOINTMENT

<p><b>Indian Bank</b> (A Govt. of India Undertaking) Corporate Office. 254-260, Avval Shannugam Salai, Royapettah, Chennai-600014</p>	
<b>ENGAGEMENT OF CONSULTANT FOR INTERNATIONAL BANKING DEPARTMENT (OVERSEAS)</b> ON CONTRACTUAL BASIS	
Mode of application	Offline application as per the prescribed format uploaded in career page of Banks' website <a href="http://www.indianbank.in">www.indianbank.in</a>
Last date for receipt of application	05.02.2024
For details please visit career page of <a href="http://www.indianbank.in">www.indianbank.in</a> for full details	
<small>Place: Chennai Dated: 23.01.2024 Chief General Manager (CDO &amp; CLO)</small>	

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- Strategic Management

Deadline - 15 February 2024

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**Timings HYDERABAD**

TUESDAY, JAN. 23
RISE 06:50 SET 18:06
RISE 15:59 SET 04:50
WEDNESDAY, JAN. 24
RISE 06:50 SET 18:06
RISE 16:55 SET 05:45
THURSDAY, JAN. 25
RISE 06:49 SET 18:07
RISE 17:50 SET 06:33

Hyderabad Weather	max min
Sangareddy	31 18
Ranga Reddy	30 19
Hyderabad City	31 18

**Hyderabad City Today**  
32°C The weather will dry. Morning will be slight cool with mist and haze. Day will be little warm. Night will be pleasant but hazy.

**Hyderabad City Tomorrow**  
32°C A dry weather to continue. Morning will be cool with mist and haze. Day will be little warm. Night will remain pleasant and hazy.

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**THE HINDU**

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Rachakonda Police gear up for India vs England test match

**The Hindu Bureau**  
HYDERABAD

The Rachakonda police will be deploying close to 1,000 policemen as a part of bandobust in view of the upcoming India vs England test match at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Uppal on January 25. Police chief of Rachakonda G. Sudheer Babu requested the public to opt for public transport to ease traffic congestions.

The stadium seats approximately 39,000 spectators and in order to avoid any untoward incidents, security measures were taken up by the Rachakonda police. Commissioner Sudheer Babu said that the 1,000 policemen are apart from OCTOPUS, Armed Reserve and Telangana State Special Police (TSSP) force etc.

"A detailed traffic advisory will be issued shortly for commuters opting to come by personal vehicles. However, I would advise them to take the metro rail or RTC buses to ensure less traffic congestion on the road," said the Commissioner.

TSLSA's appeal about mentally ill woman

**The Hindu Bureau**  
HYDERABAD

A woman in her mid 30s, who was said to be mentally ill and seen wandering with her two-year-old daughter in Chhattisgarh, has been brought to Hyderabad by the staff of Telangana State Legal Services Authority on Monday.

Information about the woman Harshitha alias Harita Raja, believed to be from Telangana since she spoke Telangana dialect, was given by the authorities of Institute of Mental Health of Bilaspur in Chhattisgarh.

TSLSA authorities appealed to people to contact them on 040 23446723 if anyone knows about her details.

## Tamilnad Mercantile Bank Limited

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**Unaudited Financial Results for the Quarter / Nine Months ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023**

₹ in Crores

Particulars	Quarter Ended 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2023	Quarter Ended 31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2022	Sl. No.	Particulars	Quarter Ended			Nine Months Ended			Year Ended 31.03.2023 (Audited)
					31.12.2023 (Unaudited)	30.09.2023 (Unaudited)	31.12.2022 (Unaudited)	31.12.2023 (Unaudited)	31.12.2022 (Unaudited)	31.03.2023 (Audited)	
<b>CASA</b>	<b>13,865</b>	<b>12,851</b>	1.	Total Income from Operations	1387.13	1365.22	1172.88	4075.24	3456.14	4710.15	
<b>DEPOSITS</b>	<b>46,799</b>	<b>43,440</b>	2.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period (before Tax, Exceptional and/or Extraordinary items)	367.83	341.83	371.88	1050.57	1046.41	1393.64	
<b>ADVANCES</b>	<b>38,386</b>	<b>34,802</b>	3.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period before Tax, (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	367.83	341.83	371.88	1050.57	1046.41	1393.64	
<b>TOTAL BUSINESS</b>	<b>85,185</b>	<b>78,242</b>	4.	Net Profit / (Loss) for the period after Tax, (after Exceptional and / or Extraordinary items)	284.23	273.51	279.70	818.97	776.21	1029.26	
<b>INTEREST INCOME</b>	<b>1,229</b>	<b>1,012</b>	5.	Total Comprehensive Income for the period (Comprising Profit/(Loss) for the period (after tax) and other comprehensive Income (after tax))	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
<b>NET PROFIT</b>	<b>284</b>	<b>280</b>	6.	Equity Share Capital	158.35	158.35	158.35	158.35	158.35	158.35	
<b>NET WORTH</b>	<b>7,668</b>	<b>6,741</b>	7.	Reserves (excluding Revaluation Reserve) as shown in the Audited Balance Sheet of the previous Year	-	-	-	-	-	6769.99	
<b>GROSS NPA %</b>	<b>1.69</b>	<b>1.70</b>	8.	Earnings Per Share (of Rs.10/- each) (for continuing and discontinued operations)							
			a)	Basic: (in ₹)	17.95	17.27	17.66	51.72	52.13	68.06	
			b)	Diluted: (in ₹)	17.95	17.27	17.66	51.72	52.13	68.06	

**NOTE:** 1. The above is an extract of the detailed format of Quarterly / Nine Months Financial Results filed with the Stock Exchanges under Regulation 33 of the SEBI (Listing and Other Disclosure Requirements) Regulations, 2015. The full format of the Quarterly / Nine Months Financial Results are available on the website of the Stock Exchange(s) ([www.nseindia.com](http://www.nseindia.com) and [www.bseindia.com](http://www.bseindia.com)) and on the Bank's Website ([www.tmb.com](http://www.tmb.com)).  
2. Information relating to Total comprehensive income and other comprehensive income is not furnished as Ind AS is not yet made applicable to banks.

Place : Thoothukudi

Date : 22.01.2024

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For and on behalf of the Board of Directors

S. Krishnan

Managing Director & CEO

# Telangana

## IN BRIEF

### One new COVID-19 case detected on Sunday

On Sunday, only one case of COVID-19 was reported in Telangana while three recovered. As per the information from the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, the State currently has 29 active cases. The last bulletin by the State government was issued on December 27.

### Doctor-couple set up science, library block in village school

International charity organisations and a local educational society came together to construct a science and library block of Masaipet Zilla Parishad High School in Medak district. Along

with the Lions Club of Enfield, UK, Dr Suguna Ram Mohan Educational Society, Empowerment through Education, and Shanta Foundation, Telugu doctor-couple in the UK Madhavi Reddy and Srikanth Mandumula came up with this much-needed initiative. The cost incurred for the project was ₹60 lakh and it was completed within six months.

### Mahesh Goud and Venkat Balmoor elected as MLAs

TPCC working president Mahesh Kumar Goud and NSUI State president Balmoor Venkat were elected unopposed as Members of the Legislative Council as no other candidate from any political party filed nominations due to lack of strength. They were declared elected as MLAs under the MLAs quota. The two vacancies were created following two BRS MLAs Kadiyam Srihari and Padi Kaushik Reddy submitting their resignation after winning the Assembly elections.

## Retired DGP Mahender Reddy's name sent to Governor for TSPSC chief post?

### Ravi Reddy

Stepping up its exercise to appoint chairman and members of the Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) on a war footing, the State government-appointed search committee has shortlisted the name of a retired Director General of Police to head the Commission.

Highly placed sources said that the search committee comprising Chief Secretary A. Santhi Kumar, Law Secretary Tirupati and GAD Secretary Nirmala Devi on Monday scrutinised the applications that were received for the post of chairperson and members of the Commission.

**Thorough scrutiny**  
The search committee, after going through the 50 applications for the post of TSPSC chairperson, is believed to have shortlisted a retired DGP. Sources sug-



M. Mahender Reddy

## 'Focus of probe into barrage damage is to make it functional'

### B. Chandrashekhar

HYDERABAD

The priority of the ongoing inquiry being carried out by the Vigilance and Enforcement (V&E) department into the damage to Medigadda Barrage of the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP) following displacement of a few piers is to rehabilitate the structure as early as possible to make it useful again.

The investigating officers who visited the structure last week were of the view that the designs approved by the wings of Central Water Commission (CWC) may not have been exactly followed by the executing agency either due to pressure from the Irrigation department authori-

ties to make some changes or because of lack of proper supervision/monitoring of the quality of work.

In a recent letter addressed to the State Dam Safety Organisation, the National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) had stated that it was not provided with data sought on the monitoring of quality during construction, third party examination, critical sectional designs, geological section.

It had submitted only the primary observation report on November 1 last year after the exterior examination of the damage on October 24 and it could be the experts again after isolating the damaged portion of the barrage for taking up detailed investigation from

the foundation level.

It is understood that documents seized by the V&E officials as part of their investigation at several offices of the Irrigation Department linked to the execution of Kaleshwaram project include information sought by the NDSA. The documents were being screened with help of engineering experts to analyse where the flaws originated.

"Scrutiny of documents will help fix responsibility on the engineers and officials concerned by finding errors of judgment both with and without malafide intention. Nobody can get away with wrongdoings. Had it happened in US or UK, heads would have rolled," an investigation of fisted.

## Lack of sync between party, govt. reason for defeat: KTR

### The Hindu Bureau

HYDERABAD

The BRS' Parliamentary Constituency meetings, which concluded on Monday, analysed reasons for the defeat in Assembly elections and a lack of coordination between the party and the government emerged as the main reason, BRS working president K.T. Rama Rao said.

Speaking at the preparatory meeting of Nalgonda Lok Sabha constituency here, he said there were no doubts regarding the party's chances. But, the results were different and the party could win only one out seven Assembly segments and one out of 12 in combined Nalgonda district. The prime reason cited by party ranks for the defeat was a lack of coordination between the government and the party, he stated.



BRS leader T. Harish Rao speaking at a party meeting on Monday.

As a follow-up to the meetings held from January 3, BRS would hold Assembly constituency-wise review meetings from February first week.

Later, party leaders including T. Harish Rao said the 125 hours of review of the BRS' performance during Lok Sabha preparatory meetings would guide the party to bounce back electorally.

## Hyderabad Metro Rail's 70-km expansion blueprint finalised

Network to cover four new corridors; CM asks officials to scrap the routes proposed by previous government as those were not "useful" for a majority of the population and will also incur heavy expenditure

### The Hindu Bureau

HYDERABAD

Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy has finalised the Hyderabad Metro Rail (HMR) second phase of 70 km length, connecting the Rajiv Gandhi International Airport (RGIA) from four corners of the city to ensure that metro rail services are accessible to the majority of commuters in the State capital.

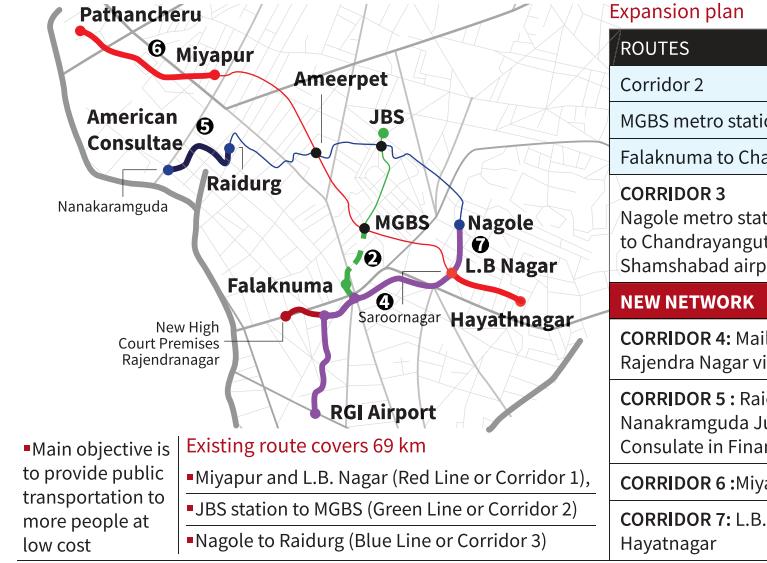
Official sources pointed out that the HMR is currently providing services on a stretch of 69 km in three corridors between Miyapur and L.B. Nagar (Red Line or Corridor 1), JBS station to MGBS (Green Line or Corridor 2) and Nagole to Raidurg (Blue Line or Corridor 3).

In the proposed next phase of expansion, the existing metro rail network between Secunderabad's Jubilee Bus Station (JBS) to MGBS (Imlibun) will be extended up to Falaknuma to an extent of 5.5 km and also from Falaknuma to Chandrayangutta crossroads to an extent of 1.5 km, said official sources on Monday.

In addition to this, the

### On a new track

HMR has prepared a new route map for expansion of metro rail network in Hyderabad



### Expansion plan

ROUTES	Distance
Corridor 2	
MGBS metro station to Falaknuma	5.5 km
Falaknuma to Chandrayangutta crossroads	1.5 km
<b>CORRIDOR 3</b>	29 km
Nagole metro station to L.B. Nagar metro station and connect to Chandrayangutta crossroads, Mairadevpally, P7 Road to Shamshabad airport	
<b>NEW NETWORK</b>	
CORRIDOR 4: Raidurg metro station to proposed High Court at Rajendar Nagar via Aramghar	4 km
CORRIDOR 5: Raidurg metro station to Biodiversity Junction, Nanakramguda Junction, Wipro Junction and American Consulate in Financial District	8 km
CORRIDOR 6: Miyapur metro station to Patancheru via BHEL	14 km
CORRIDOR 7: L.B. Nagar Metro Station to Vanasthalipuram and Hayatnagar	8 km

metro rail network will be constructed in four new corridors. The existing Nagole metro terminal station will be extended up to L.B. Nagar terminal metro station and also connect to the Chandrayangutta crossroads, Mairadevpally, P7 Road and to RGIA at Shamshabad for a total distance of 29 km.

Corridor 4 will be built from Mairadevpally to the proposed High Court at Rajendar Nagar via Aramghar

to an extent of 4 km. Corridor 5 will be built from Raidurg metro station to Biodiversity junction, Nanakramguda junction, Wipro junction and American Consulate (Financial District) to an extent of 8 km.

Corridor 6 will extend from Miyapur terminal metro station to Patancheru via BHEL to a distance of 14 km and Corridor 7 from L.B. Nagar metro station to Vanasthalipuram and

Hayatnagar for a distance of 8 km.

HMR has already prepared a new route map based on the instructions of the Chief Minister for the expansion of the metro rail network in the identified areas.

Mr. Revanth Reddy has directed the officials concerned to scrap the routes proposed by the previous BRS government as those were not "useful" for a majority of the population

and will also incur a heavy expenditure.

The main objective of the newly designed metro rail routes is to provide public transportation to greater number of people at low cost.

The government will fulfil its goal of providing metro rail services available to the poor and the middle classes by taking up the expansion of metro rail connectivity to all areas in the city, they added.

Candlelight rally protests blocking of Rahul Gandhi's Yatra in Assam

### The Hindu Bureau

HYDERABAD

Protesting against blocking Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Assam, Telangana Congress leaders led by Minister for IT D. Sridhar Babu held a candlelight rally from Babu Jagin Ram's statue to Ambedkar's statue in Basherbagh on Monday.

Mr. Sridhar Babu demanded that the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) apologise to the Congress party and Mr. Gandhi for failing to provide security to him. He said blocking Mr. Gandhi from visiting Sri Sri Sanjeev Dev Satra temple in Bordua in Assam's Haibagona reflected the feeble mentality of the BJP.

He said the Assam government has failed to provide security to Mr. Gandhi as the BJP was jealous of the support for yatra across the country.

Telangana Congress working president T. Jayaprakash Reddy said, "The cowardice of BJP was exposed in blocking the yatra. One needs to have guts and conviction on issues to walk from one corner to the other corner of the country. That fearless attitude of Rahul Gandhi is what is worrying the BJP the most."

Mr. Peter said the issues are too big to just rush the report and therefore, the committee needs to study it in depth before finalising the report. If the government permits, the committee will meet the Collectors, who have a fair understanding of the Dharani system, in two days.

He said there is a need to reach out to the landowners in the villages to deal with the issues effectively. To a question, he said the Committee will not solve problems but suggest solutions to the problems created by the portal.

Mr. Sunil Kumar said land was an emotive issue for any farmer and these issues must be dealt with care. He said computerisation of lands is necessary, but ensuring that the land records are safe and trustworthy is more important in the computerisation process.

The Dharani portal are unique and one has no relation to the other. Mistakes in Dharani have cost land rights to farmers and they have also lost government subsidies because of the mistakes in the system.

The interim report will provide some relief to the affected parties and the government will decide on effecting the changes. However, the final report will focus on rectification of all the issues and those that might crop up in future.

## Dharani has expedited registration, but lacks transparency, says panel

### The Hindu Bureau

HYDERABAD

Dharani, the official land records management portal of Telangana, has created new problems, and so, a holistic approach to dealing with the deficiencies, including coordination with other departments, is on the mind of the panel constituted by the government to study the problems.

The third meeting of the panel was held on Monday where it was decided to interact with districts Collectors apart from heads of other departments like Agriculture and Registration as the panel wants to look into minute issues.

"Though Dharani has expedited registration process, there is no transparency. Registration without follies is as important as ease with which registration is done," they said.

The panel headed by All India Kisan Congress vice-president M. Kodanda Reddy

and consisting of professor of Law Sunil Kumar and former IAS officer Raymond Peter said that an interim report would be submitted to the government as the panel wants to look into minute issues. The Dharani portal are unique and one has no relation to the other. Mistakes in Dharani have cost land rights to farmers and they have also lost government subsidies because of the mistakes in the system.

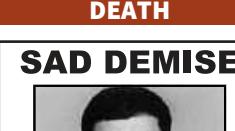
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### OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

#### DEATH

##### SAD DEMISE



**D R Venkatesh**

Senior Partner of MSSV & Co.

Chartered Accountants

Died: 22-01-2024

Bereaved by Family, Partners

& Staff members.

#### DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

##### 13th ANNIVERSARY

**Dr. VANKAMAMIDI KRISHNA MOORTHY**

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# LDF, UDF slam Modi; BJP says Cong. is not able to tolerate festive mood

Both the fronts in Kerala depict the Ayodhya event as more of a political spectacle to galvanise Hindu votes ahead of the LS election than a religious ceremony; BJP flays Congress government in Karnataka for not declaring a holiday on Monday

## The Hindu Bureau

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

**T**he ruling Left Democratic Front (LDF) and the United Democratic Front (UDF) Opposition in Kerala accused Prime Minister Narendra Modi of blurring the time-honoured constitutional boundary between state and religion by wilfully donning the role of the principal celebrant and master of ceremonies at the consecration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on Monday.

Both the fronts depicted the high-profile event that cast Mr. Modi at its centre as more of a political spectacle to galvanise Hindu votes ahead of the Lok Sabha election than a religious ceremony marked by profound spirituality.



Devotees light earthen lamps at Sree Padmanabhaswamy Temple on the occasion of the consecration of Ram Temple in Ayodhya. PTI

In contrast, the BJP portrayed the inauguration as the crowning glory of the Narendra Modi government.

of the Constitution's secular foundation.

Mr. Vijayan said several persons holding high office did not attend the event to uphold the public's faith in the non-religious nature of the republic's founding document.

Leader of the Opposition V.D. Satheesan said in a Facebook post: "Ram will never abide by those who killed Mahatma Gandhi, and the Congress will have no truck with assassins masquerading as upright persons."

### 'Sacred occasion'

The BJP in Karnataka termed the consecration of the Ram temple a "sacred occasion of the unification of Hindus."

(With inputs from Bengaluru)

The BJP flayed the Congress government for not declaring a holiday on Monday. "The entire country is immersed in the religious fervour as people are celebrating the occasion on their own. The Congress has declined to grant a holiday as it could not tolerate the festive mood," alleged Leader of the Opposition R. Ashok. He told reporters in Bengaluru that those who fail to revere Rama "will meet a similar fate that befell Ravana."

Meanwhile, prominent leaders of the BJP participated in special pujas organised at different temples in the State.

## SpiceJet to compensate 2 for cancelling flight tickets

### The Hindu Bureau

KOCHE

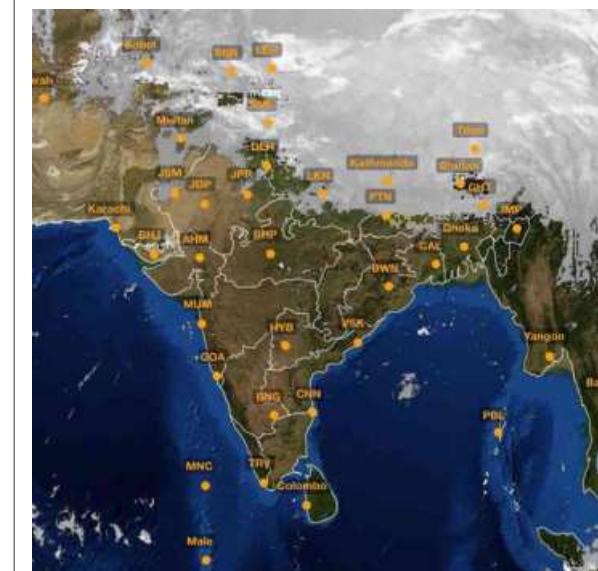
The Ernakulam District Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission has ordered a travel agency and an airline to pay two customers a compensation of ₹64,000 for cancelling tickets without making alternative arrangements.

The complainants had booked on the agency's website air tickets for their return journey from New Delhi to Kochi through Bengaluru for official purpose for ₹11,582 on March 9, 2019. However, the airline cancelled the tickets 13 days before the date of journey without making alternative arrangements.

The travel agency offered to refund only ₹8,884. Even the promised refund did not materialise, the complainant alleged.

## WEATHER WATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD; POLLUTION DATA: CPCB; MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 18.00 HRS)

**Forecast for Tuesday:** Dense fog likely in isolated pockets of Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Assam, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Sikkim, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Odisha and north Madhya Pradesh. Cold wave conditions likely in isolated pockets of Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	17.4	—	Kozhikode	—	35.9	25.7
Ahmedabad	—	27.5	—	Kurnool	—	34.8	21.6
Aizawl	—	22.2	—	Lucknow	—	16.8	7.7
Allahabad	—	12.8	—	Madurai	—	32.5	22.1
Bengaluru	—	30.6	—	Mangaluru	—	32.4	22.6
Bhopal	—	24.3	—	Mumbai	—	31.1	17.1
Bhubaneswar	—	25.4	—	Mysuru	—	31.1	17.0
Chandigarh	—	14.5	—	New Delhi	—	17.6	6.1
Chennai	—	30.9	—	Patna	—	18.0	5.5
Coimbatore	—	32.2	—	Port Blair	—	30.3	23.6
Dehradun	—	15.0	—	Puducherry	—	31.1	22.6
Gangtok	—	13.2	—	Pune	—	32.5	14.8
Goa	—	32.2	—	Raipur	—	3.2	25.0
Guwahati	—	20.1	—	Ranchi	—	23.2	7.5
Hubballi	—	34.0	—	Shillong	—	15.5	4.5
Hyderabad	—	31.3	—	Shimla	—	16.6	5.0
Imphal	—	22.2	—	Srinagar	—	11.6	5.3
Jaipur	—	22.8	—	Thiruvananthapuram	—	0.4	24.7
Kochi	—	33.0	—	Tiruchi	—	32.5	21.4
Kohima	—	15.5	—	Vijayawada	—	30.8	21.0
Kolkata	—	20.7	—	Visakhapatnam	—	29.2	22.6

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

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CITIES	SO <sub>2</sub>	NO <sub>2</sub>	CO	PM <sub>2.5</sub>	PM <sub>10</sub>	CODE
Ahmedabad	... .6	.11	.14	211	168	■
Bengaluru	.10	.17	.24	104	136	■
Chennai	.25	.49	.46	109	108	■
Delhi	.25	.14	.64	364	291	■
Hyderabad	.6	185	.38	70	—	■
Kolkata	.16	.78	.27	300	200	■
Lucknow	.9	.33	.95	286	199	■
Mumbai	.7	.72	.8	202	153	■
Pune	113	160	111	107	100	■
Visakhapatnam	.11	.39	.51	121	120	■

Yesterday

## The Hindu Bureau

BELAGAVI

## Odisha police seek Mudhol hound



A.P. Congress president Y.S. Sharmila staging a protest at the Gandhi statue in Visakhapatnam on Monday. V. RAJU

The Odisha Police Department has expressed the desire to include Mudhol hounds into their canine squad.

A team of senior officers of CID of Odisha police will visit the Mudhol dog research and breeding centre in Bagalkot district on January 29 to sign an agreement.

## The Hindu Bureau

VISAKHAPATNAM

In her maiden visit to Visakhapatnam after taking charge as the new Andhra Pradesh Congress president, Y.S. Sharmila on Monday joined her party activists from the district in a protest against the BJP over the latter's alleged attack on the Congress's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Assam.

Ms. Sharmila raised slogans against Prime Minister Narendra Modi during

the protest. She said, "The Congress party strongly condemns the attack by BJP cadres on the Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra in Assam. The BJP is not able to digest the fact that the yatra has been cruising unstoppably, uniting hearts and inspiring people, moving unopposed under Mr. Rahul Gandhi's leadership."

She further said, "Doesn't the country belong to everyone? Do only the BJP and RSS people live here? Should Mr. Rahul Gandhi take permission

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24.01.2024 at 04.00 PM; Last Date Receipt of Bids: 01.02.2024 at 04.00 PM;

For 19 to 22: Download Start Date: 24.01.2024 at 04.00 PM; Last Date Receipt of Bids: 27.01.2024 at 04.00 PM; Name &amp; Address Officer, Cell No.: Smt. Sri. M. PEER SINGH, EE, Div-6, CRZ, GHMC, Hyderabad, Ph. No. 9154960551. For further details can be seen at e-procurement @ www.tender.procurement.gov.in

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## From fear to hope

The Ram temple must help in healing wounds and creating harmony

The opening of the Ram temple in Ayodhya is a sharp turn in the course of the nation. The central role of the state in the rituals associated with the inauguration of the temple is being celebrated by the proponents of the temple, while its opponents fear it is the beginning of a dangerous slide. Two divergent visions of Indian nationhood inspire the two sides. The inauguration of the temple marks a definitive milestone, if not a comprehensive victory, for the vision of the BJP and Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Mr. Modi said it was the beginning of a new era in the history of the country, an era that will last for centuries. He called for humility alongside the celebration of victory, and invoked the universality of the spirit of Ram that encompasses all of humanity. Portraying the temple as a link between India's rich cultural inheritance and ambitions for the future, across the various regions and communities of the country, Mr. Modi exhorted fellow citizens to think big and work purposefully for progress. Ram Rajya has had multiple imaginings. The temple in Ayodhya must inspire and promote the conception of a polity determined not by an obsession with the past, but by an appreciation of the difficulties of the present, and the challenges and opportunities of the future.

The Prime Minister also noted the fact that the temple was facilitated by a judicial decision. The Supreme Court verdict that handed over the disputed land in Ayodhya to the Hindu petitioners had also unambiguously noted that the demolition of Babri Masjid on December 6, 1992 by kar sevaks was a "serious violation of law". Devotees of the temple, in their moment of celebration, should not be unmindful of the past. Triumphalism and grievance must give way to reconciliation and harmony; and fear must yield to hope. The temptation to use the same template of settling contests over places of worship must be abandoned immediately. Seeking to settle historical grievances can trigger unpredictable social forces and risk national unity. Mr. Modi himself noted this fact, while appreciating the relative ease with which the temple was built after the Supreme Court verdict in 2019. In the making of present-day politics, the past is often used as malleable material. It can surely be deployed for the purpose of forging unity and creating harmony, instead of accentuating differences. The wisdom of statecraft is in making the right choice.

## Spiking tensions

Dialling down aggressive rhetoric is crucial for peace in Korean Peninsula

Kim Jong-un's decision to declare South Korea as an enemy state of the North and abandon the idea of peaceful reunification signals that Pyongyang is adopting a more aggressive stand. Recent months also saw increased war rhetoric from Mr. Kim as well as a series of weapons tests by the North. Last week, Pyongyang claimed to have fired a medium-range hypersonic missile that could travel at low altitudes. It has also tested underwater, unmanned, nuclear-capable drones. Earlier this month, the North fired hundreds of artillery shells near the South's islands of Yeonpyeong and Baengnyeong, closer to the Northern Limit Line, a disputed inter-Korean maritime border. It is evident from these actions that the Kim regime is seeking to alter the status quo. But Mr. Kim's actions were not entirely unprovoked. He sees the growing military convergence between South Korea, Japan, and the U.S. as a security threat. The three countries recently linked up their missile-radar data with one another. The U.S. and South Korea also routinely conduct joint military exercises, which triggers sharp reactions from the North. South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol, who assumed office in May 2022, has also maintained a hawkish stand towards Pyongyang, saying that peace can be achieved only through strength.

In the past, despite its rhetoric, North Korea was open to diplomatic engagement with the South and the U.S. In 1994, it reached the Agreed Framework with the Clinton administration. As part of this, it agreed to freeze the operation and construction of its nuclear reactors. It was after the collapse of the Agreed Framework during the George Bush Jr. administration that Pyongyang went nuclear. President Donald Trump reached out to the North, which temporarily stabilised inter-Korean ties. When the Trump initiative failed, tensions spiked again. The North's leaders, given what happened to Libya, Iraq, and the Iran nuclear agreement, have little incentive to give up their nuclear weapons for an agreement with the U.S. In an apparent rejection of the path of reconciliation with the U.S., Pyongyang has ruled out talks on denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula and has taken measures to strengthen ties with China and Russia. But even a complicated diplomatic path would be preferable to a military path any day. A direct conflict between the two Koreas, one a nuclear power and the other backed by the world's most powerful country, would be disastrous for the entire region. Dialling down tensions and rebuilding confidence in inter-Korean relations should be an immediate priority for all stakeholders – Seoul, Pyongyang, and Washington.

## Tax contribution by States needs to be revisited

The Finance Commission's important job is to recommend a distribution formula specifying each State's share in the part of the Union tax revenue assigned to States. Such distribution formulas have a few weighted determinants. Since the 1st Finance Commission, some States have been arguing that their contributions to the Union tax revenue have been higher than others and, therefore, they rightly have higher shares in the Union tax revenue. In the first eight Finance Commissions, tax contribution with very little weight was a determinant in the distribution formula. Since the 10th Finance Commission, this tax contribution was dropped from the distribution formula. Here, we argue that tax contribution by each State is a good measure of efficiency, and the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime creates an opportunity for its inclusion in the distribution formula.

**Equity, efficiency in tax revenue transfers**  
Two important tasks of the Finance Commissions are (i) to recommend the proportion of the Union tax revenues to be assigned to States and (ii) to recommend the share of each State in the assigned tax revenue. Till 2000, that is, the 10th Finance Commission, the States' share was restricted only to personal income tax and Union excise duties and after that, all the Central tax revenues were pooled, and States' shares were decided. With reference to the second task, the Finance Commission devises a distribution formula to arrive at a share for each State, and it is based on the principles of equity and efficiency. Equity stipulates that the revenue-scarce States and States with higher expenditures get larger shares of Union tax revenue than others. Efficiency is to reward the States that are efficient in collecting revenue and rationalising spending. The trade-off between equity and efficiency is normative and remains dynamic in successive Finance Commission recommendations.

States from which large volumes of income tax revenue have been collected argued to consider and assign a higher weight to 'tax collection' as an indicator of tax contribution. The origin of income is essential to estimate States' contributions to income tax revenue, which is difficult to identify, as a person may pay income tax from one State though the income earning is from other States. Successive Finance Commissions have assigned 10% to 20% weight to income tax revenue collection/assessment in the distribution formula for income tax revenue because collection is not a good indicator of contribution. In the case of Union excise duties,



R. Srinivasan

is Member, State Planning Commission



S. Raja Sethu Durai

is Professor of Economics, University of Hyderabad

The tax contribution of each State is a good measure of efficiency, and the GST regime creates an opportunity for its inclusion in the distribution formula

the value of taxable products consumed in a State is essential to decide its contribution. Due to the unavailability of proper consumption statistics, contribution was never a determinant in the distribution formula for Union excise duties.

We should note that tax contribution is an efficiency indicator because a State's level of development and economic structure decides its tax contribution. However, Finance Commissions had assigned only 10% to 20% weight to this efficiency indicator. Population, a chief indicator of the expenditure needs of the State, was given 80% to 90% weight in the first seven Finance Commissions as far as income tax distribution was concerned. In the case of distributing revenue from Union excise duties, the entire distribution was based on population or other indicators of expenditure needs such as area, per capita income, proportion of Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe population, and some indicators of social and physical infrastructure needs. Since the 10th Finance Commission, the Commission has recommended a single distribution formula for both income tax and Union excise duties. Thus, the Finance Commissions have always favoured assigning more than 75% weight to equity indicators.

Since 2000, the formula for the distribution of pooled Central tax revenues included tax effort and fiscal discipline as efficiency indicators with a weight of around 15%. Tax effort is broadly defined as the ratio of own revenue of a State to its Gross Domestic Product. Fiscal discipline is the proportion of own revenue to the revenue expenditure of a State. In the 15th Finance Commission, the distribution formula had tax effort with a weight of 2.5%, and demographic performance, an indicator of efficiency in population control, was given a weight of 12.5%. The remaining 85% weight was distributed among equity indicators of per capita income, population as per the 2011 Census instead of the conventional 1971 Census, area, forest cover, etc.

**Tax contribution in distribution formula**  
Even though some States have been arguing for increasing the weightage for efficiency indicators such as tax effort and fiscal discipline, these indicators have received lower weights as they are unstable. The tax effort is affected by discretionary tax policies and unexpected changes in actual tax bases. The fiscal discipline is affected by contractual payments such as salaries, pensions, and interest payments, as well as the tied-grant-induced expenditures of States. An objective measure of tax contribution by States, given the stability in tax structure, should be a good indicator of efficiency and be assigned

a larger weight. GST satisfies this criterion.

GST is a consumption-based destination tax that is equally divided between the State and Central governments. In other words, the State GST accrual (inclusive of Integrated GST settlement) to a State should be the same as the Central GST accrual to the Union government from that State. Therefore, accurately estimating the tax contribution from a State to the Union exchequer is feasible under GST. Since GST is a unified tax system, the calculations by these authors show that there is not much of a variation in the tax efforts of States. However, the absolute amount of GST revenue generated from each State would differ by the size and structure of States' economies, and this marks the importance of the inclusion of this tax contribution as an efficiency indicator in the distribution formula. A State's GST contribution is not affected by discretionary tax policies of the State; it only reflects the accurate tax base of the State that is being exploited for the national good.

In addition to GST, petroleum consumption is also an indicator of tax contribution to the national exchequer. The Union excise duty and sales tax on petroleum products are outside GST. The cascading tax burden of these two taxes in addition to the burden of customs duty on petroleum imports falls on the final consumers of petroleum products in a State. Just like GST, the relative shares of petroleum consumption vary across States, but such shares are stable over time for every State. Therefore, the relative share of a State's petroleum consumption reflects the relative contribution of the State to the national exchequer in the category of Union excise duties and customs duties on petroleum products.

Including the relative GST contribution and petroleum consumption of a State in the distribution formula is irresistible for yet another reason, that is, both these two ratios indicate the relative differences in the incomes (both personal and corporate) accrued to the residents of a State because consumption is a function of income. The share of CGST and Union excise duty is about 30% of States' share in Central tax revenue in 2021-22 and the similar ratio for personal and corporate income taxes is 64%.

Thus, the two relative contributions, namely GST revenue and petroleum consumption, of States are fair and accurate measures of States' contributions to the national exchequer and a good measure of efficiency. There is a persuasive case for the 16th Finance Commission, recently constituted by the Union government, to debate and include these ratios as a measure of efficiency with a weightage of at least 33% in the distribution formula.

## The idea of one nation, one election is against federalism

In September 2023, the Union Government set up a 'High Level Committee on One Nation, One Election' under the chairmanship of former President of India, Ramnath Kovind. The High Level Committee has met on three occasions and sought the views of various national and State political parties on the subject of a common elections schedule. Recently, public views and those of eminent jurists were also solicited in this regard. Though there is no definitive timeline for the Committee to submit its recommendations, the fact that the timing of this exercise coincides with the lead-up to the general elections in 2024 raises pertinent doubts. Nevertheless, as the outcome of this exercise has the potential to alter the fundamentals of our democratic set-up and reset the federal structure, it is necessary to examine the legal issues at the earliest juncture.

There are compelling reasons to believe that the High Level Committee is likely to return a recommendation in favour of a common schedule comprising elections to the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies overlooking genuine constitutional and legal concerns. This is why all the attention, in the aftermath of this exercise, would entirely focus on the Supreme Court of India. This would be India's *Baker v. Carr* moment where the Supreme Court of the U.S. deliberated the concept of "entering the political thicket". The Indian Supreme Court, which has self-characterised its constitutional role as the "sentinel on the qui vive", would be called upon to determine, quickly and purposefully, the ultimate fate of Indian democracy.

**Are common elections feasible?**  
One of the reasons assigned in support of One Nation, One Election is the high amount of expenditure towards the conduct of elections. It is reported that the 2014 general elections cost the public exchequer an estimated ₹3,870 crore. It is argued that common elections for the Union



Manraj Shunmugasundaram

is Advocate, Madras High Court, and DMK spokesperson. Dhileepan P. provided inputs for the article

Any action that impinges upon the independent constitutional existence of a State by altering the duration of its Legislative Assembly would naturally be anti-federal and unconstitutional

Parliament and State Assemblies would reduce expenditure significantly. Another reason put forth by proponents of a common election is that the Model Code of Conduct comes into effect twice in a five year cycle, which affects the seamless conduct of government business and results in 'governance downtime'.

Opponents of the common elections contend that these reasons are logically and factually untenable. The cost of holding free and fair elections to elect a government of the choice of the people is a price that can never be high. There are occasions where a government may not complete a full term of five years, and elections may be held again. Such occurrences are expressions of the democratic system and ought to be accepted. Likewise, the Model Code of Conduct and other guidelines issued by the Election Commission are necessary pains to ensure that executive influence over voters is kept to a minimum and the playing field, during the election period, remains level. In any case, it sounds strange for a Union government and the Election Commission that have refrained from holding Assembly elections in Jammu and Kashmir, for nearly five years, to express strong concerns regarding governance downtime.

**Legal concerns**  
In *S.R. Bommai v. Union of India* (1994), the Supreme Court declared that the States have an independent constitutional existence, and they have an important role to play in the political, social, educational and cultural life of the people as the Union. The Constitution provides for a specific tenure for the State Legislatures, which is five years from the date appointed for the first meeting. A similar provision also exists for the tenure of the Union Parliament. Therefore, the introduction of a common election process would necessarily require alteration of the existing duration of a number of State Legislatures. This would go against the express

language in the Constitution and be in violation of the view expressed by the Supreme Court in the *S.R. Bommai* case. Therefore, any such action that impinges upon the independent constitutional existence of a State by altering the duration of its Legislative Assembly would naturally be anti-federal and unconstitutional.

The next test would be that of bias, exclusion, and inequality adopted in this exercise. A cursory glance of the website created by the High Level Committee, intended to be a repository of all relevant information on the subject and act as a platform for interaction from all stakeholders, shows that it is available only in English and Hindi. This is to say that such a landmark consultation process is being conducted in one of the 22 official languages of the Union.

Finally, there is a question that goes to the root of the independence of the Election Commission, a constitutional body endowed with autonomy to take independent decisions regarding elections. Similar to demonetisation, when the Reserve Bank of India was kept in the dark, the Election Commission seems to be a silent spectator to the entire process undertaken by the High Level Committee set up by the Union government.

**Can One Nation, One Election be stopped?**  
In the U.K., home of the common law jurisprudence, Parliament is supreme. However, the Indian constitutional architecture is structured differently granting higher courts inherent and broad powers of judicial review when executive actions transgress the fields assigned to them. The stage is set for a constitutional showdown in the not-too-distant future – one that will raise the question of whether constitutional courts, especially the Supreme Court, will enter the political thicket. At the moment, there seems to be no alternative but to enter and wade through the thicket, if the constitutional architecture of this country is to be preserved.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Ram temple

A purely religious event was hijacked and politicised by the BJP keeping in mind the Lok Sabha elections ("Consecration today; PM, priests to lead ceremonies," Jan. 22). Anyone opposing this politicisation was branded "anti-Hindu". This is nothing but exploitation of people's religious sentiments and faith.

S.R. Krishnamurthy

Chennai

It is unfortunate that the Opposition chose to boycott the ceremony. They have given the BJP an opportunity to brand them "anti-Hindu" before the general elections. The Hindu heartland is already not in favour of them. Now their boycott is adding fuel to the fire. The Opposition cannot win if they have no clear narrative. An anti-Modi agenda alone isn't going to fetch them votes. It looks

like the elections are a done deal for the NDA.

S. Seshadri

Chennai

The BJP has successfully accomplished the task of constructing the Ram temple. Besides adding a historic chapter to the religious books, it has made an indelible imprint in its political journey. The party will undoubtedly go the whole hog now to reap the

political dividends from this important event.

Johan Dhanakumar

Chennai

**Antibiotics resistance**  
The irrational prescription of the 'Watch' group antibiotics, the stress on antibiotic prophylaxis, the fact that patients do not complete their antibiotics course, the excess use of antibiotics in livestock and fish farming, and

over-the-counter sale of antibiotics have all contributed to the rise of drug-resistant infections ("Data Point: India among nations overusing 'Watch' group antibiotics," Jan. 22).

Discovering and developing novel classes of antibiotics is challenging. It can often take several years before they are made available in the market. Stringent measures must be taken to curb the misuse of these

drugs.  
Biju C. Mathew  
Thiruvananthapuram



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# Fired up and plugged in

**A**s India throttles to become the fastest-growing economy in the coming years, it will have to grow in the wake of a global agreement at COP-28 to phase down unabated coal. In this critical decade, the spotlight will be on how India decarbonises its power sector while ensuring economic development and energy security.

As the seventh most-vulnerable country to the impacts of climate change, India has been at the forefront of climate action – it has reduced overall fossil fuel subsidies by 76% between FY14 and FY22 and is priming the domestic industry to nearly triple its installed renewable power generation capacity by 2030. Despite significant climate action and ambition, coal-based power plants continue to provide the base power load support of over 100 GW on most days of the year. Due to rapidly increasing electricity demand, any future predictions of India's reliance on coal are laden with uncertainty. The country has affirmed that while it continues to rapidly expand renewable energy, coal will remain a vital energy source till it reaches the status of a developed country in a geopolitically turbulent world.

But to keep the economy powered while decarbonising, it will have to use its existing assets better, while simultaneously limiting exposure to new coal assets and investing in energy storage capabilities to integrate a higher share of renewable energy in the power grid. Four steps are critical for this.

First, managing thermal plant outages better during peak demand periods. In 2023, -38 GW of coal-based power plants across India witnessed unplanned outages or were not called on to generate power during the top 10% peak demand days. Improved availability and utilisation of existing plants can mitigate the need for investments in new(er) thermal assets to meet peak power

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**Focus on energy security will likely drive India's decade of decarbonisation and renewable energy**

demand in the medium term. This will require power utilities to forecast demand better to anticipate outages, plan maintenance and keep plants online during peak days. This must be aided by regulations that incentivise plants' availability during peak periods.

Second, increasing the flexibility of the existing coal fleet. To seamlessly integrate more renewable energy (RE) into the grid, thermal plants that typically produce a steady load of power must learn to follow the vagaries of the wind and the sun. This can be done by making our existing coal plants more flexible – reducing their minimum power load and improving ramp rate capabilities. The Central Electricity Authority of India has already proposed modifying/retrofitting ~92% of the current coal and lignite-based capacity to enable it. Such a phased plan must be premised on minimising grid emissions and RE curtailment for maintaining demand-supply balance. Further, such flexible services must be adequately compensated. For instance, the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission and regulators in States such as Haryana and Uttar Pradesh have devised payment mechanisms to remunerate power plant owners for one-time retrofitting costs and escalation in related operation and maintenance costs. Other States must follow suit, thereby resulting in a wider pool of plants available to help reduce the burden on a handful of plants today.

Third, incentivising payment for storage services beyond the supply of energy units. When RE has to contribute significantly to our demand, energy storage systems will have to support the power grid during hours when renewables are not available. This is the reason for many new 'round-the-clock' bids that combine RE and storage, where surplus generation of renewable energy is stored in a battery. However, standalone battery

energy storage systems (BESS) will also be needed but they add a significant cost to each unit of electricity supplied. Entities that deploy batteries must then be compensated by utilities for the value they bring to grid operation. For example, numerous studies indicate that BESS increases RE integration into the grid and reduces operational stress on the thermal fleet.

Fourth, indigenising supply chains for battery storage and RE technologies. Being the lifeline of the power system, coal economy is an important source of domestic value addition, job creation and furthering India's 'atmanirbhar' aspirations. In FY22, India produced coal worth ~1.5 lakh crore, providing much-needed revenues to Central and State governments and an additional ~27,000 crore to the Indian Railways. At the current pace of installation, a mere ₹7,000 crore is the domestic value added to manufacture solar modules. The PLI scheme has given fresh life to indigenisation efforts and committed ~₹19,000 crore to solar manufacturing. In this decade, these investments can support exports and domestic value additions of over ₹75,000 crore (at current prices). Boosting domestic value and job creation in clean energy would strongly mitigate concerns associated with disruptions in the global supply chain and loss of livelihoods in the economy.

While the attention on the global stage focuses solely on decarbonisation, domestic energy security will drive policymaker focus and investments in India. With falling renewable energy and storage prices, decision-makers need a transparent assessment of the long-term opportunity costs of locking ourselves into conventional power sources to meet near-term needs. They must prioritise affordable electricity for all segments of the economy. This will then become the plank for more aggressive decarbonisation commitments in the years ahead.

# The Batadrava-BJP connect

The saffron party's hold on Assam's most important spiritual centre remains firm

**STATE OF PLAY****Rahul Karmakar**

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**C**ongress leader Rahul Gandhi probably had a feeling of déjà vu when he was not allowed to enter Batadrava Than, the birthplace of Assam's most revered spiritual icon, on January 22, around the time Prime Minister Narendra Modi led the 'Pran Pratishtha' ceremony for the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. In December 2015, he was allegedly turned away from western Assam's Barpeta Satra on a day he launched the Congress campaign for the 2016 Assembly elections. A few weeks later, former Chief Minister Sarbananda Sonowal launched his election campaign for the BJP from the Uttar Kamalabari Satra in Majuli.

There are estimated 900 *satras*, monasteries of the neo-Vaishnav order, across Assam and beyond. Barpeta and Uttar Kamalabari are two of the foremost among them but they are not on the same level of spirituality or reverence as the Batadrava Than. And Batadrava has been more than just an exalted place of worship for the adherents of the Eksara Dharma, a neo-Vaishnav monolithic form of spiritualism propagated by 15th-16th Century saint-reformer Sri-Srimanta Sankaradeva.

Patronised primarily by Ahom and Koch rulers, Sankaradeva and his disciples set up the *satras*, which lorded over swathes of land donated by local kings, elites, and devotees. After India's independence, specifically after the creation of Bangladesh, many *satras* became central to the issue of "illegal immigrants", a staple of electoral politics in Assam since a violent agitation in



1979-98 to eject non-citizens from the State. The alleged encroachment of *satra* land by Bengal-origin or migrant Muslims became a rallying point for the BJP, which started building up momentum steadily before coming to power in 2016 in alliance with two regional parties.

In 2021, the government headed by Himanta Biswa Sarma formed a three-member inquiry commission headed by Asom Gana Parishad MLA Pradip Hazarika with BJP legislators Mrinal Saikia and Rupak Sarma as its members. The interim report was submitted to the Chief Minister on December 3, 2022. The report said about 1,900 hectares of land belonging to 303 *satras* were under encroachment, mostly by the migrant Muslims. The "systematic" land-grabbing, the panel noted, began before independence when the Muslim League formed the government in undivided Assam in the late 1930s. It also said 250 *satras* disappeared over the past few decades because their abbots and inmates were forced to leave by the encroachers. The report further said 74% of the encroachment on *satra* lands was in the minority-dominated Barpeta district and flagged Batadrava for special attention.

The government did not stop at evicting the encroachers from the *satra* lands. Revenue Minister Jogen Mohan told the Assembly in March 2023 that the government freed 99% of the *satra* land within three months. These squatters

were among 8.57 lakh people illegally occupying government, forest, wetland, railway, and *satra* land across Assam, he said. A year before the 2021 Assembly elections, the government declared an annual grant of ₹10 lakh per *satra* and ₹2.5 lakh per *namghar*, a community prayer hall used by the followers of Sankaradeva. An average of 70 households are associated with a *namghar*, and the patrons of the *namghars* are usually associated with one *satra* or the other. This translates into a sizeable share of voters in an increasingly polarised Assam.

It was, thus, not surprising for Home Minister Amit Shah in February 2021 to lay the foundation stone for a ₹188-crore project to develop Batadrava into a major religious and cultural tourism centre. Apart from the optics, it sent a message that the BJP means business as the "saviour of Hinduism" from the "ghus-pethiye" aka Bangladeshi people. Weeks before his high-profile programme, the Assam unit of Congress launched a bus yatra as part of their Assam Boson Ahok (come, let us save Assam) campaign from Batadrava, underscoring its political importance.

Almost three years later, Rahul Gandhi's yatra hit a rumble strip at Batadrava after its management committee rescheduled his preprogrammed visit to the 'than' on January 22 to after 3 p.m., given the Ram Temple consecration. Mr. Gandhi said the *satra* authorities were pressured by people at the top, meaning the Chief Minister. But his inability to visit the religious site at his convenience conveyed that the BJP wants it known it holds the copyright on key places of worship that can swing Hindu sentiments in its favour.

# Government guarantees on a rising trend in 12 States

In Sikkim, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, govt. guarantees as a % of GDP have crossed the 10% mark

**DATA POINT****The Hindu Data Team**

**A**s a State grows, the need to fund infrastructure projects increases. The Public Sector Enterprises which are executing these projects need funds. While many of them get funds within the State budget, some of the projects require huge investments, for which PSEs turn to banks and financial institutions. The State government stands as guarantor for such loans, otherwise the banks may not be willing to extend loans to such entities.

Given the guarantee, the banks are happy to give loans, often without even doing due diligence about the commercial viability of such projects. Because of the very low risk attached to such loans, they also most often do not monitor the projects they finance. As long as the PSEs are financially sound and servicing the debt, this is a win-win situation. However, if the PSEs turn loss-making, and if the banks invoke the guarantees, it is the State government which will be in trouble. This was the concern that the RBI's Working Group on State Government Guarantees had expressed in its report released last week.

**Chart 1** shows the outstanding State-wise guarantees issued as a share of each State's Gross Domestic Product at the end of March in 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021 and 2022. For instance, for Andhra Pradesh, the outstanding guarantees as a share of its GDP grew from around 4% to over 10% in the said period. In fact, the guarantees are on an increasing trend in 11 other States – Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Meghalaya, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tamil Nadu, Telangana and Uttar Pradesh.

In Sikkim and Telangana, along with Andhra Pradesh, the share of outstanding government guarantees as a share of their GDPs was

above the 10% mark at the end of 2022. Whereas it was around 8.9% in the case of Meghalaya and Uttar Pradesh. The Working Group has asked governments to have a fixed ceiling on the guarantees issued and make it uniform across all States. The Group has also recommended the States assess risks attached to each guarantee and assign weights based on the sector and the borrower's past record.

A look at how the States used to finance their Gross Fiscal Deficit shows that two decades back, the National Small Saving Fund (NSSF) was the biggest source of financing. However, due to policy changes, now market borrowings are the major source. **Chart 2** shows this transition between 2005-06 and 2022-23.

While the share of banks and financial institutions in the financing of States' gross fiscal deficit has remained low, in terms of absolute numbers they are still considerable as the quantum of loans given by the banks to the States has zoomed over the years. **Chart 3** shows the loans given by the banks directly to State governments and also to State enterprises that have guarantees from the government. As can be seen from the chart, both these figures have surged in the recent past.

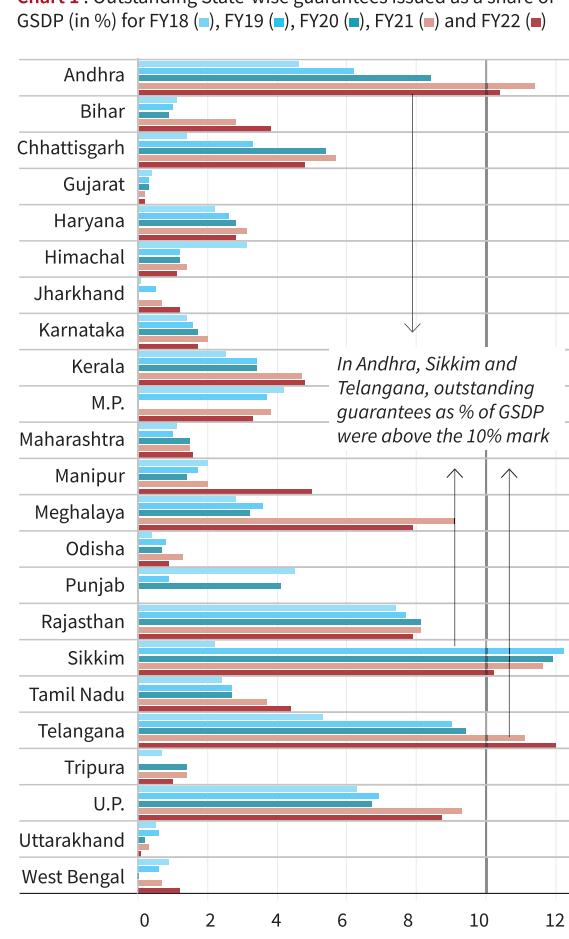
As the loans are guaranteed by the State, if they are not honoured, the banks may not give fresh loans to the enterprises and guarantees given by the government will fall in value. To avoid that, the Working Group has come up with some recommendations. Having a uniform ceiling for incremental guarantees issued during a year at 5% of the revenue receipts or 0.5% if the GSDP of the State, whichever is less, is the major criterion. The riskiness of the borrowers and projects involved should be considered. A State Finance Department unit should be set up to capture all guarantees and monitor them continually. All States should report in a similar format so that it is easier to oversee.

## State of affairs

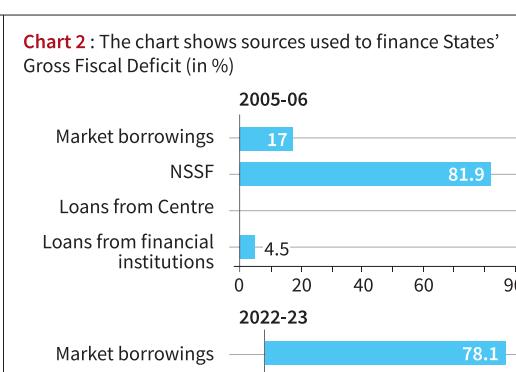
The charts are based on the report of the Working Group on State Government Guarantees published by the Reserve Bank of India



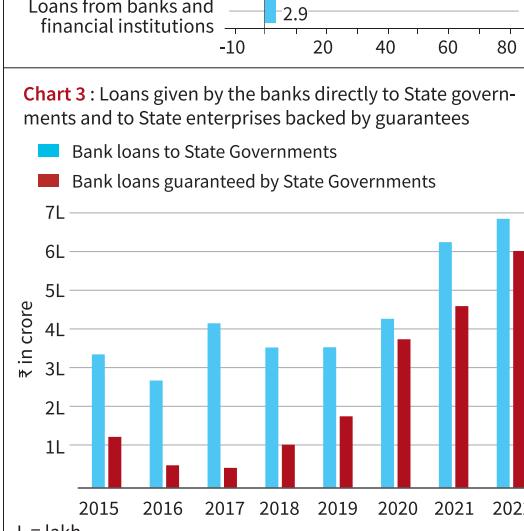
**Chart 1 : Outstanding State-wise guarantees issued as a share of GSDP (in %) for FY18 (blue), FY19 (light blue), FY20 (medium blue), FY21 (dark blue) and FY22 (red)**



**Chart 2 : The chart shows sources used to finance States' Gross Fiscal Deficit (in %)**



**Chart 3 : Loans given by the banks directly to State governments and to State enterprises backed by guarantees**

**FROM THE ARCHIVES**

**The Hindu**

**FIFTY YEARS AGO JANUARY 23, 1974**

## Peking establishes its rights

From V. T. Sambandam

SINGAPORE, Jan. 21.

By occupying the Paracels Islands after a battle with the South Vietnamese forces, the People's Republic of China has established its strategic presence in the South China Sea which links the Indian Ocean with the Pacific and the Far East. The ownership of this chain of islands, running about 750 miles north-south and east of Da Nang (South Vietnam) and about 175 miles south of the Chinese Island of Hainan, has been disputed over a long period. When the French occupied Indo-China it belonged to the French. During the World War II it was occupied by Japan and later turned over to China at the 1951 Peace Conference. Since then South Vietnam, as successor to the French and Taiwan as "representing" mainland China, have both claimed sovereignty over it. In the 1950's the Philippines too had claimed it.

On Jan. 11, the Chinese Foreign Ministry, protested against the Saigon authorities' action in adding ten islands of the group to South Vietnam. On Jan. 15, according to the New China News Agency, Saigon sent warships to the area leading to the incidents. On Jan. 19, Chinese ships, numbering over ten, took over the territory in a two-day battle.

This is the first time that China has taken naval action against a disputed territory.

## From Page One

## Rituals done, PM calls it a historic day

Calling upon the "critics" of the temple to introspect, while describing the temple as a symbol of peace and harmony, the Prime Minister said there was an apprehension that if the Ram Temple was built it would lead to unrest, but that "they failed to understand the purity of India's society."

"Ram Temple is a symbol of peace, patience, harmony, and maturity of Indian society. Today, I call upon those people to rethink their perspective," Mr. Modi said to the audience, which comprised prominent people from all walks of life, including seers who had been involved in the Ram Temple movement, industrialists like Mukesh Ambani and his family, film stars like Rajinikanth and Amitabh Bachchan, as well as Uttar Pradesh Governor Anandiben Patel.

## Spirit of service

Speaking on the inclusiveness and spirit of service of the characters in the Ramayana and the life of Lord Ram, the Prime Minister said there was much to learn from them. "We need to learn the value of service and loyalty from Lord Hanuman, fortitude from Adivasi mother Shabari who had the conviction that 'Ram would arrive', while the Nishad Raj had helped Ram and Sita cross the Ganga in his boat," he said. "Even the smallest of creatures such as squirrels had contributed to the construction of the Ram Setu, while the Jatayu had taken on Ravana to save Sita despite knowing he would be defeated," Mr. Modi said.

He also tendered an apology, seeking forgiveness from Lord Ram, on the centuries of wait till today's consecration, citing that perhaps there might have been "deficiencies in our efforts for it to be so".

The Prime Minister added that there is a question over what is to follow after the consecration of the Ram Temple. "This grand Ram temple will be a witness to the rise of a magnificent India. It teaches us that if the goal is proven true, if it is born out of collective and organised strength, then achieving that goal is not impossible. We should take a pledge to build a capable, developed, magnificent, and divine India. It is our time; we have reached here after centuries of waiting; this is the step towards nation building," he said.

The Ramjanmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Trust, which was formed for the construction of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya, had also nominated 16 other people apart from Mr. Modi as *yajmans* for the ceremony. They included Domraja of Kash; Anil Chaudhary, the keeper of the flame at Manikarnika Ghat in Varanasi; Mahadev Gaikwad, considered the representative of the 315 nomadic and 198 denoted tribes; and Anil Mishra and his wife Usha Mishra, termed the "*pradhan yajman*" of the consecration rituals.

Later, Mr. Modi went to the Kuber Tila, located in the southwestern part of the temple complex which houses an ancient temple of Lord Shiva, to offer prayers.

The place is considered significant for Hindu-Muslim unity and a key site during the First War of Independence. He also met with workers who were involved in the construction of the Ram Temple.

The temple, built in the Nagara style, is based on a design by Chandrakant Sompura and his son Ashish, and the idol of the Lord Rama deity has been sculpted by Arun Yogiraj of Mysuru.

## Chinese vessel in Indian Ocean, 'heading' to Male

"The vessel is expected to run an ocean survey operation in the Indian Ocean Region raising concern in India," OSINT handle @detresfa posted on X.

"This is routine movement," an Indian official source said without commenting further.

As reported by The Hindu earlier, there has been steady rise in the deployment of Chinese research vessels in the IOR and the general area of deployment has been observed around the Ninety Degree East Ridge and Southwest Indian Ridge. These vessels have powerful equipment for snooping and gathering a range of data.

Amid repeated messages from New Delhi, Colombo in December 2023 announced a year-long moratorium on foreign research vessels visiting Sri Lankan waters.

*Xiang Yang Hong 03*, which was scheduled to call at a Sri Lankan port this year, is now reportedly heading to the Maldives.

The development comes after India and the U.S., over the last couple of years, voiced concern with Sri Lankan authorities over the visits of Chinese vessels to the island's ports for research purposes.

Reports of the Chinese vessel's arrival in Maldives later this month coincide with the visit of the Chinese Communist Party's (CCP) Vice-Minister of the International Department to the Maldives. The CCP's Sun Haiyan called on President Mohamed Muizzi on Monday, less than a fortnight after the Maldivian leader's return from China, after a five-day state visit during which he agreed to "elevate" strategic ties with the Maldives. It comes even as his government consistently demands that Indian troops be withdrawn from the Maldives. On his return from Beijing, Mr. Muizzi announced a March 15 deadline for the removal of Indian soldiers, while New Delhi has said the discussion on the matter is "ongoing".

The development also comes days after the Foreign Ministers of India and Maldives met in Uganda, on the sidelines of the Non-Alignment Movement [NAM] summit.

# Rahul stopped from visiting shrine; Morigaon meet banned

Congress leader was stopped when he was around 17 km from shrine of saint-reformer Srimanta Sankaradeva; he was barred from holding a meeting and march in Morigaon district, citing law-and-order issues; yatra reaches Meghalaya

**The Hindu Bureau**  
GUWAHATI

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra was disrupted in Assam on Monday, when the police prevented him from visiting Batadrava Than, a shrine and birthplace of the 15th-16th century saint-reformer Srimanta Sankaradeva, who propagated a neo-Vaishnav sect. Similarly, he was prevented from holding a meeting in Morigaon district of the State, citing law-and-order concerns.

The yatra later entered Meghalaya, where Mr. Gandhi addressed a rally.

High drama prevailed on the ninth day of the yatra as Mr. Gandhi and his supporters were stopped by the police in Nagaon district of Assam, on the way to Batadrava Than.

A video showed police personnel blocking Mr. Gandhi's path and he was heard asking them why he was not being allowed in. "I was invited there on 11th [January]. I think they have been pressured... They have been obviously ordered from the top. They don't want me to go," he said.

Mr. Gandhi had left for



Halted on the way: Rahul Gandhi with party leaders and supporters after he was not allowed to visit the Batadrava Than in Nagaon district of Assam, on Monday. PTI

the monastery at Batadrava early in the morning, but was stopped at Haibargaon, around 17 km away, prompting him and other party leaders to sit on a dharna.

Congress leader Jairam Ramesh told presspersons, "We managed to convince the local authorities to let our local MP Gaurav Gogoi and local MLA Sibamoni Bora enter the shrine, which showed democracy was still alive. Rahulji left after two hours of squatting outside the barricade, interacting with the people." Mr. Gogoi said the

shrine holds immense importance for the followers of neo-Vaishnavism.

"...Rahul Gandhi was denied permission to visit Batadrava Than by the police citing law and order and pre-scheduled programme. The fact is the opposite because there was no programme taking place," he wrote on X.

Mr. Gogoi said the shrine was empty and a rumour was spread that a law-and-order situation might arise. "Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma brought a black day to the Batadrava Than and the le-

gacy of Sankaradeva," he said.

The managing committee of Batadrava Than on Sunday announced that they would not allow the Congress leader to visit the shrine before 3 p.m. after Mr. Sarma at a press conference requested Mr. Gandhi not to visit before the Ram Temple consecration.

## Cancelled meet

Further tensions awaited the yatra later in the day, as Mr. Gandhi was barred from holding a street-corner meeting and padayatra in Morigaon district. In a

letter to the district Congress unit, District Commissioner Devashis Sarma said the authorities apprehend anti-social activities as the yatra and the Ram Lalla *Pratishtha* would happen simultaneously.

"This negates all earlier permissions accorded by the administration for holding any public meeting/padayatra in Morigaon district," the letter said.

The police cited Mr. Gandhi's Z+ security for the advice to avoid unscheduled stoppages by him and his entourage.

In the evening, the yatra entered Meghalaya, where Mr. Gandhi addressed a rally in Nongpoh.

He said the ideology of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the BJP has destroyed the idea of Manipur. "The politics of hatred and violence had torn Manipur apart, causing hundreds of deaths and thousands of people to lose their property. It's a complete tragedy," Mr. Gandhi said.

On Sunday, the party had said Mr. Ramesh's car and mediapersons accompanying the yatra were attacked by BJP workers in Assam's Sonitpur district. (With inputs from PTI)

SP president comes out in support of Rahul Gandhi

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Samajwadi Party president Akhilesh Yadav on Monday asked what could be a greater injustice than preventing anyone from being able to see their God.

His comments came as former Congress president Rahul Gandhi, during the course of his Bharat Jodo Nyay Yatra, was prevented from visiting Batadrava Than, a shrine and the birthplace of 15th-16th century saint-reformer Srimanta Sankaradeva, who propagated a neo-Vaishnavaite sect.

The Congress saw Mr. Yadav's post on X, formerly Twitter, as a positive sign, considering that seat-sharing talks between the two allies had come to a grinding halt after three rounds of discussions.

Senior SP leader and Rajya Sabha member Ram Gopal Yadav, while speaking about the negotiations, said the two sides had walked half the length and a few more steps remained.

The Samajwadi Party has conceded seven seats to the Rashtriya Lok Dal and is offering fewer than 10 to the Congress. The Congress has refused the offer.

Sources said the top Congress leadership would reach out to Mr. Yadav in a few days for further talks.

## Ministry rushes team to Manipur; Meitei MLAs call for 'positive action'

**Vijaita Singh**  
NEW DELHI

The Union Home Ministry on Monday rushed a team of officials led by A.K. Mishra, Adviser (Northeast), to Manipur following the fresh spate of killings and violence in the State.

Meanwhile, 35 Meitei MLAs in Manipur passed a resolution that they will take action in consultation with the public if the "Government of India is unable to take any positive action".

The Home Ministry team, which includes Intelligence Bureau (IB) officials, met Chief Minister N. Biren Singh. It will meet various civil society groups from the tribal Kuki-Zo community and the Meitei community. The officials are also expected to meet representatives of the Arambai Tengkol, a radical armed Meitei group that has been accused by the Kuki-Zo groups of instigating violence. A Ministry of



Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh chairs a meeting in Imphal on Sunday with representatives of 10 parties. ANI

ficial said the team was sent after assessing the ground situation.

The team will also meet Kuki-Zo groups and are expected to broker an amicable solution between the two communities.

The CM had skipped the North Eastern Council (NEC) meeting chaired by Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Shillong on January 19. On Sunday, he questioned the efficacy of the Central security forces in curtailing violence in the border town of Moreh.

Speaking on the occasion of Manipur Statehood

Day, Mr. Singh said, "The killers of Chingtham Anand, the SDPO [Sub-Divisional Police Officer] of Moreh, have been arrested. But if the Central forces fail to protect the lives and properties of the people of Manipur, they should go back." In the past week, at least six people, including two police personnel, have been killed.

The team, led by Mr. Mishra, is also negotiating with the Kuki insurgent groups that are part of the Suspension of Operations (SoO) pact and have been demanding a separate ad-

ministration for the Kuki-Zo-inhabited areas in the hill districts of Manipur. Meitei groups have demanded the revocation of the pact.

The Meitei MLAs passed a resolution that the "SoO agreements with the armed militant groups, and the immunity it provides to these groups from a firm reaction from Central forces, is the main cause of the never-ending cycle of violence". It added that the SoO agreement with other militant groups who also indulge in anti-State activities should not be extended beyond February 29, when the agreement comes to an end.

It added that in many sensitive areas, the Assam Rifles were not responsive and remained mute spectators when unarmed civilians (particularly farmers) were being indiscriminately fired upon.

The resolution added that the public's faith in the forces had been shattered.

## 13 arrested as clash breaks out at Naya Nagar near Mumbai

**Purnima Sah**  
MUMBAI

Thirteen persons were arrested after a group of men in vehicles bearing saffron flags, were allegedly attacked in the Naya Nagar area of Mira-Bhayandar near Mumbai in Thane district, a day ahead of the *Pran Pratishtha* ceremony of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya.

A senior police official said the clash between members of two different communities erupted around 11 p.m. on Sunday, when the men drove through the locality shouting religious slogans. They were attacked by a mob from the neighbourhood, he added.

Unverified videos of the violence, showing the mob attacking the vehicles with iron rods and stones, went viral on social media.

Additional forces have been deployed in the area to prevent any further untoward incidents.

## SC to take up Uddhav faction's plea against Speaker's decision

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday agreed to examine a petition filed by Shiv Sena Uddhav Balasaheb Thackeray (UBT) leader Sunil Prabhu against the Maharashtra Assembly Speaker's decision to dismiss disqualification petitions against Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and supporting MLAs, while holding the Shinde faction as the "real" Shiv Sena.

A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud issued notice to Mr. Shinde and listed the case after

two weeks.

"The Speaker heard and decided the disqualification proceedings based on the judgment by the Supreme Court... The Shinde group has approached the High Court to further delay the case ahead of the elections..." senior advocate Kapil Sibal, appearing for Mr. Prabhu, submitted.

The Speaker's decision came nearly two years after Mr. Thackeray's camp moved disqualification petitions against Mr. Shinde and his supporting legislators under the Tenth Schedule (anti-defection law) of the Constitution in June 2022.

The Speaker had

held that since the 'Shinde faction' was the real political party, the UBT faction's allegations that the Shinde faction violated the whip could not be sustained.

The disqualification petitions filed by the UBT faction argued that the Shinde faction had illegally passed a resolution in June 2022 re-appointing Mr. Eknath Shinde as the Shiv Sena Legislative Party leader and Bharat Gogawale as the Chief Whip.

A five-judge Constitution Bench, last year, directed the Speaker to decide the disqualification petitions within a "reasonable time".

A three-judge Bench headed by Chief Justice of India D.Y. Chandrachud fixed the third week of

## SC to hear if Centre encroached on legislative domain of Punjab

**Krishnadas Rajagopal**  
NEW DELHI

The Supreme Court on Monday decided to examine if all border States have to be treated alike while demarcating the area of jurisdiction of the Border Security Force (BSF), a Central unit.

The court was hearing a dispute raised by Punjab against the Centre. The top court said it would determine if the Centre had encroached on the legislative domain of Punjab.

April for hearing the suit filed by Punjab against the Centre of virtually stripping the State and its police of its powers.

The Constitution gives the State control over the police and of maintaining public order. Punjab has challenged

the constitutional validity of a notification issued by the Centre in October 2021 extending the reach of the BSF to 50 km by invoking Section 139 of the BSF Act, 1968. The provision authorises the Centre to confer powers and duties on members of the BSF in respect of any Central Acts. The purpose of the provision was to gain more control on trans-border crimes.

The Centre has argued that the extension of jurisdiction had been made to better police crimes involving illegal entry into the country and offences under the Passport Act.

M HY-HYE



The court was hearing a dispute raised by Punjab against the Centre of virtually stripping the State and its police of its powers.

The Constitution gives the State control over the police and of maintaining public order.

Punjab has challenged

# Ram Temple consecration



**Prayers and festivities:** (from left) The gathering at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya ahead of the consecration on Monday; after the ceremonies, Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacts with the workers who built the temple; cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar on the temple premises; and security personnel patrol the Sarayu river in the temple town. ANI/PTI/AFP



Jan. 22 will be etched in history as key moment: V-P

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar on Monday congratulated the nation on the Ram Temple's consecration in Ayodhya, adding that it was gratifying to witness the moment marking the reawakening of national pride.

Expressing heartfelt wishes to Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the 11-day rigorous *anushthan*, Mr. Dhankhar said that January 22 would be etched in history as a defining moment of "tryst with divinity in our civilisational trajectory".

"Gratifying to witness celebratory moment marking reawakening of national pride all over," he said in a statement issued on Monday morning.

On this day, he said, "we must resolve to inculcate Lord Ram's values of integrity, forgiveness, bravery, sincerity, humility, care, and compassion as a way of life to bring about enlightenment, peace, harmony, and righteousness all around".

## With no iron or steel, Ayodhya temple is a study in sandstone

The edifice will eventually be of three storeys; each floor will be 20 feet high and will have 392 pillars and 44 gates; about 70% of the complex is expected to be maintained as a green area; nearly 600 existing trees are preserved in this belt

**Press Trust of India**  
AYODHYA

The Ayodhya temple, consecrated on Monday, is a sprawling structure built with sandstones by overcoming engineering challenges and showing sensitivity to nature, say authorities connected with its construction.

Champat Rai, general secretary of the Sri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra, said the temple's construction was the result of "collective wisdom" of "some of the best brains in the country".

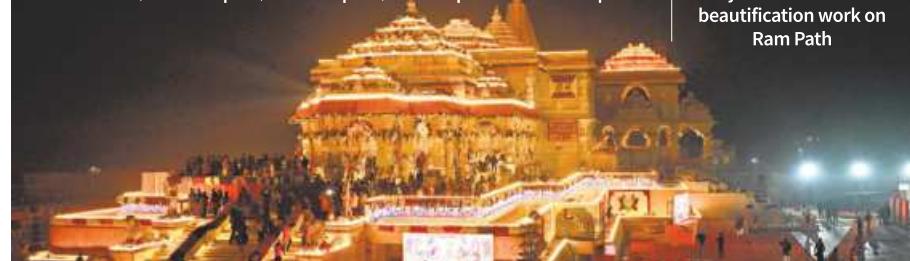
No iron or steel has been used in the construction of the grand structure. Stones have been sourced from the Bansi Paharpur area in Rajasthan. Images of Lord Hanuman and other deities, peacocks and flower patterns have been carved into them.

"The entire temple superstructure will eventually be three storeys –

### Brick by brick

A look at the figures related to the Ram Temple consecrated in Ayodhya on January 22

2.7 acres	57,400 sq. ft	₹1,800 crore
Area of the temple	Built-up area	Estimated construction cost
3 Number of floors	12 Gates in the temple	₹3,500 crore Donations collected by Ayodhya Ram Temple Trust
360 ft Length of the temple	235 ft Width of the temple	₹30.93 crore Project cost for facade beautification work on Ram Path
161 ft Height of the temple		



ground plus two floors," Mr. Rai said. Visitors will climb 32 steps from the eastern side to reach the main temple.

#### Nagara style

The temple complex, built in the traditional Nagara style, will be 380 feet long from east to west, 250 feet wide and 161 feet high. Each floor will be 20 feet high and will have 392 pil-

lars and 44 gates. During excavation, the ground was found unsuitable for laying the foundation stone, a challenge that engineers overcame by creating an "artificial foundation" over which the superstructure sits. Around the grand temple is a rectangular periphery called percola, a feature found in temples in South India, but not generally in the north,

Mr. Rai had earlier said. The percola will be 14 feet wide and the periphery spans 732 metres. The temple will be nestled within the percola periphery.

Ornate figures of elephants and lions and idols of Lord Hanuman and Garuda were installed at the main entrance earlier this month. They have also been made using sand-

stones from Bansi Paharpur.

"An ancient Shiva temple that exists on the Kuber Tila has also been revitalised," Mr. Rai said. After the consecration ceremony, Prime Minister Narendra Modi offered prayers at the Kuber Tila.

A major part of the temple compound will be a green area with hundreds of trees. Mr. Rai underlined important features such as sewage and water treatment plants, a fire brigade post and a dedicated electricity line.

About 70% of the complex will be a green area. "The green area includes portions which are very dense and, in some segments, even sunlight hardly filters through," Mr. Rai had said. Nearly 600 trees are preserved in this belt.

More than 3,000 kg of flowers of over 20 varieties have been used to decorate the grand structure, says Sanjay Dhalalikar, head of the floral decoration team.

## IN BRIEF



### Fifty instruments used during Mangal Dhwani at temple

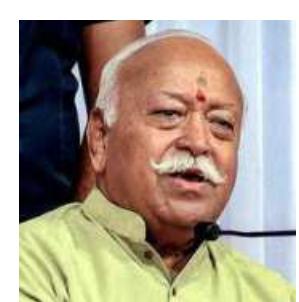
Fifty traditional musical instruments from across the country were part of a devotional *Mangal Dhwani* during the consecration at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on Monday. The orchestra was organised by Ayodhya's celebrated poet Yatinra Mishra, and the rendition was aided by the Sangeet Natak Akademi. The instruments included pakhawaj, flute and dholak from U.P., veena from Karnataka, and nadaswaram, tavil and mridangam from Tamil Nadu. PTI

### Guests who attended event got book on Ayodhya, diya

A book on Ayodhya, a metal 'diya', a special 'mala' and a scarf bearing the name of Lord Ram are among the items that have been gifted to the guests who attended the consecration ceremony here on Monday. The gifts were given in a bag that had a graphic image of the new temple and Lord Ram. The Shri Ram Jamaboomi Teerth Kshetra had earlier said that over 7,000 guests were invited to ceremony. The book is titled 'Ayodhya Dham – The Lord's Abode'. The guests also received a box of four laddoos, chips, revdi, cashew nuts and raisins. PTI

## Stop fighting over petty issues, stay united: RSS chief

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI



We must move forward with truth, compassion, wisdom, discipline, and charity. *Ram Rajya* will come by giving up greed and by staying disciplined

**MOHAN BHAGWAT**  
RSS chief

is the name of a land where there is no strife, no doubts ... when strife happened, Ram left for 14 years of forest exile and came back after the strife was over. He came back after ending strife in the whole world," he said.

Quoting Mahatma Gandhi, he said there was enough on earth for everyone's needs but not for everyone's greed", highlighting the importance of charity.

"It should be our duty to serve people who are in crisis and pain. We must earn with both hands, keep whatever is needed for our own lives and donate everything else to charity," the RSS chief said.

Praising the Prime Minister, Mr. Bhagwat said he had always known Mr. Modi as someone who followed discipline.

## Gunshots will not echo in the temple town any more: U.P. Chief Minister

**Mayank Kumar**  
AYODHYA



**Grand welcome:** Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath arriving at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on Monday. PTI

Ram Temple is most likely the first such case in the world where the majority community of a nation had struggled for so long for the construction of a temple at the birthplace of

their idol. He that on the historic moment, "every village and town in the country had transformed into Ayodhya".

In a reference to the 1990 police firing during

Samajwadi Party rule in the State, killing more than a dozen *kar sevaks*, he said the streets of Ayodhya would not echo with gunshots any more or witness curfew. "Bullets will not be fired in Ayodhya, Sarayu Maiya [Sarayu river] will not be stained with blood. Curfew will not cause havoc in Ayodhya," he said, adding the consecration of Ram Lalla heralds the proclamation of the establishment of Ram Rajya.

"Heartfelt gratitude and congratulations to our respected PM Narendra Modi ji, for the realisation of our pledge, fulfilment of our resolution and bringing an end to our prolonged wait," he said.

## Deve Gowda, Naidu attend consecration

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

lucky" to have witnessed the event.

Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda and the former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh N. Chandrababu Naidu attended the consecration ceremony at the Ram Temple in Ayodhya on Monday.

Mr. Gowda's Janata Dal (S) is now in alliance with the BJP in Karnataka. He was accompanied by his son and former Karnataka Chief Minister, H.D. Kumaraswamy, and grandson Nikhil Kumaraswamy at the event. Speaking after the ceremony, he said he considered himself "very

## Mamata leads a rally for harmony, seeks BJP ouster

**Shiv Sahay Singh**  
KOLKATA



**Seeking amity:** West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee leading the Sanhati rally in Kolkata on Monday. DEBASISH BHADURI

she touched upon almost every issue, from the Centre's alleged denial of MGNREGA wages, to the NRC, and exhorted people to fight the BJP in the upcoming general election.

## Himachal Cong. Minister attends Ram Temple event

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Deviating from party line, a Minister in the Congress government in Himachal Pradesh, Vikramaditya Singh, and former Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee (UPCC) chief Nirmal Khatri were the two prominent leaders who attended the *pran pratishtha* (consecration ceremony) at Ayodhya on Monday.

The top Congress leadership stayed away from the consecration ceremony by calling it a "BJP/RSS event".

**'A golden day'**  
Terming January 22 a *swarna diwas* (golden day), the RSS chief said Ram Lalla (child Ram) had come back to Ayodhya after 500 years. He paid tributes to all those who fought for the Ram Janmabhoomi movement.

Explaining why Lord Ram had left Ayodhya, Mr. Bhagwat said that it was due to the *kalah* (disputes) during his times. "Ayodhya

## IN BRIEF



## Poachers kill female rhino in Kaziranga and steal its horn

Poachers struck at the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve after almost a year to kill an adult female rhino. Officials said the forest staff found the carcass in the Agarhatoli Range of the 1,302 sq. km park around 8 a.m. on Monday. The rhino was shot and its horn was sawn off, they said. "The rhino is likely to have been killed on January 21 night. The post-mortem report is awaited and the Forest Department and the police have intensified their combing operations," an official said. Preliminary probe suggested the poachers reached the park after crossing the Brahmaputra by boat. The Agarhatoli Range is on the southern bank of the river.

## Odisha shifts 37 IAS officers ahead of Assembly election

Ahead of simultaneous general and Assembly polls, the Naveen Patnaik Government on Monday carried out a major reshuffle in State bureaucracy by shifting 37 IAS officers from their respective positions. The State government has changed district collectors of 19 out of 30 districts. The notable change is Ashish Thakare, the 2011-batch IAS officer, who has been transferred as district collector to Mayurbhanj from Keonjhar district. Vineet Bharadwaj was shifted from Mayurbhanj to Cuttack as a district collector. The Opposition Bharatiya Janata Party had raised objections to the continuation of these two officers as district collectors saying their tenures had exceeded four years.

# President urges youth to stay vigilant against misuse of technology

Murmu confers the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar for the year 2024 on 19 children; she says India has an invaluable resource in the form of a large population of youth

## The Hindu Bureau

NEW DELHI

**P**resident Droupadi Murmu stressed the importance of technology for the educational and personal development of children, but cautioned against its misuse such as in the case of deep fakes and financial frauds.

"Social media, while a powerful tool for communication and awareness, is also misused for spreading rumours. Therefore, it is essential to stay vigilant and avoid such activities as a wrong step can jeopardise your future," Ms. Murmu said after giving away the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (national children awards) here.

She also noted that excessive use of devices such as mobile phones, laptops and television had led to a decline in physical activities among today's generation. "I urge the youth to at least engage in one sport," the President said.

Ms. Murmu said India had an invaluable resource



**Young talent:** President Droupadi Murmu with Union Minister Smriti Irani during Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2024, at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi on Monday. ANI

in the form of a large number of youth. "This resource can play an important role in the progress of not only India but also the whole world. We have to make our youth capable for using technology. They have to be encouraged for innovation and entrepreneurship."

## Awards presented

A total of 19 children were given the national children's awards for the year 2024 by the President. The 'Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya

Bal Puraskar' was given to nine boys and 10 girls in six categories, namely art and culture, bravery, innovation, science and technology, social service and sports.

The awardees belong to 18 States and Union Territories, including two aspirational districts. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will interact with the awardees on Wednesday. Union Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani met and congratulated them.

The Central government confers the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRB) to children for their exceptional achievements. The awards are conferred upon the children in the age group of 5-18. Some of the awardees this year are Charvi A (sports) from Karnataka; Suhanii Chauhan (innovation) from Delhi; Pendala Lakshmi Priya (art and culture) from Telangana; and R. Surya Prakash (sports) from Andhra Pradesh.

# PM announces solar rooftop scheme for 1 crore households

**The Hindu Bureau**  
NEW DELHI

Hours after the consecration of the Ram idol in Ayodhya, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, citing divine inspiration, publicly announced a scheme to electrify one crore households with solar electricity.

"Today, on the auspicious occasion of the consecration in Ayodhya, my resolve has been further strengthened that the people of India should have their own solar roof-top system on the roof of their houses. The first decision I have taken after returning from Ayodhya is that our government will launch 'Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana' with the target of installing rooftop solar on one crore houses. This will not only reduce the electricity bill of the poor and middle class, but will also make India self-reliant in the field of energy," Mr. Modi tweeted from his personal account.

No information on a timeline for such installations was given.

Accompanying the tweet were photographs of Mr. Modi convening a meeting with officials, including those from the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy. These included the department's Minister,



Prime Minister Narendra Modi during a meeting on installing solar rooftop systems. ANI

R.K. Singh, and Secretary, Bhupinder Bhalla.

## Muted growth

Currently, there is no Centrally compiled estimate of the number of households in India with rooftop solar installations.

What is known is that despite increases in installed solar capacity, the growth in the number of rooftop solar installations has been muted. *The Hindu* spoke to multiple analysts, and though none had definitive numbers, it is estimated that there are fewer than 10 lakh households with rooftop solar installations.

As of July 31, 2023, only 2.2 GW (1 GW is 1,000 MW) worth of rooftop installations were reportedly installed in Indian homes, according to information presented to the Lok Sabha.

# Odisha govt. seeks urgent deployment of kumki elephants from Tamil Nadu

Satyasundar Barik  
BHUBANESWAR

The Odisha government has sought assistance of Tamil Nadu for making *kumki* elephants and mahouts available in the wake of worsening human-elephant conflict in the eastern State.

Odisha's Additional Chief Secretary (Forest and Environment) Satyabrata Sahu wrote a letter to his Tamil Nadu counterpart, Supriya Sahu, Additional Chief Secretary (Environment, Climate Change and Forest), stating: "In recent years, we have been facing significant challenges in mitigating human-elephant conflicts. Your help in getting trained *kumki* elephants would greatly assist us in addressing these conflicts effectively and humanely."

In Odisha, there have



**Skilled work:** An elephant being escorted to a truck using a kumki near Pollachi in Tamil Nadu in July 2023. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

been 230 encounters between humans and elephants in the financial year 2023-24.

**High casualty number**  
In these encounters, 139 humans had been killed

and 108 injured. Last financial year, there were 257 encounters in which 146 persons had been killed and 157 injured. As there are two more months left in the current financial year, the human casualties

in elephant attacks could be an all-time high. "Kumki" elephants can be deployed strategically to help us to manage and drive wild elephants thereby reducing damage to crops, human habitations and the potential loss of both human and elephant lives. These elephants can also be deployed for forest patrolling and rescue operations," said the Odisha government officer.

## T.N. model

Stating that Tamil Nadu has a successful and commendable programme in place, whereby *kumki* elephants are trained and utilised for wildlife conservation purposes, he requested the Tamil Nadu government to provide at least four *kumki* elephants for deployment in conflict-prone areas of Odisha.

"These elephants will

serve as an invaluable asset to our State's wildlife organisation, aiding our efforts to minimise conflicts and safeguard both human and wildlife interests.

It is also requested that the mahouts taking care of those *kumki* elephants may also be deputed along with the elephants, for only initial handholding support to our local mahouts to get them acquainted with those *kumki* elephants," Mr. Sahu mentioned in the letter.

"In light of urgency and magnitude of the human-elephant conflict issue in Odisha, I would request your prompt consideration of this proposal. Your support will significantly contribute to our ongoing conservation efforts and prove instrumental in mitigating wildlife conflicts in Odisha," he further said in the letter.

The Indian Air Force's Rapid Response Team from the BHISHM Cube led by Wing Commander Manish Gupta evacuated Mr. Srivastava within minutes, capitalising on the critical

# Mobile hospital saves a life during consecration in Ayodhya, says official

Bindu Shajan Perappadan  
NEW DELHI

**BHISHM Cube of Project Aroga Maitri, an indigenous mobile hospital, deployed in Ayodhya on Monday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT**

golden hour – the first hour following a traumatic injury or medical event, which is crucial for successful emergency treatment.

## Quality care

"Upon initial assessment, Mr. Srivastava was found to have very high blood pressure, recorded at 210/170

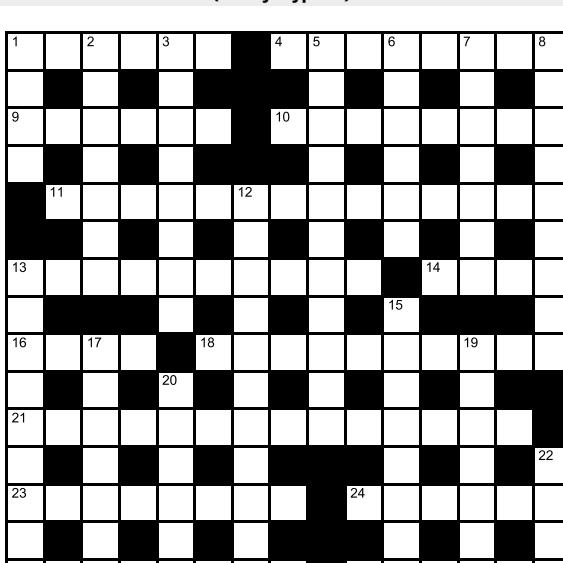
mmHg. The team diagnosed him correctly and treated him as per the appropriate protocol," said the health official.

The BHISHM Cube's advanced facilities and skilled medical personnel ensured that Mr. Srivastava received hospital-quality care on-site, stabilising his condition.

TH CROSSWORD + 14078  
(set by Hypatia)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ <https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn>

SCAN TO PLAY



## Across

- Beast using mink extracted from wild pack animal (6)
- Mocking small crook mostly occupied stealing rupees (8)
- Heart of military officer, say (6)
- Letters from publicist urge Nevil (author) (8)
- How long had Loki prepared to search everywhere? (4,4,3,3)
- Orders on a desi app? They are identical (4,2,1,3)

- Capital lost by Hindu God of wealth in transportation service (4)
- Station's name on the radio (4)
- Oil supplier set up clay building to store bitumen, essentially? (10)
- Casually browsing, old women entertained by snakes dancing (6,8)
- Reread novel depicting sex in private (8)
- Study of frog, say? (6)
- Spencer left play regularly behind closed doors (8)
- Eye problem in author's work on Central Asians? (6)
- Down**
- Basically ancient Nile's key hieroglyph! (4)
- Exercise and run lifting block near a structure outdoors (7)
- Registers in airport to scan crime (6,2)
- Chairperson who's glued to a monitor? (5,6)
- Man below Queen put up as interim ruler (6)
- Flu can spread between boy and group of adherents (3,4)
- Entertaining folks under 51 performing reviews (4,5)
- Precisely how pistachio is found? (2,1,8)
- Father's weapons - they should be updated and secure (9)
- Writer's rejected after second fake composition (8)
- It can't possibly include rules of Buddhist philosophy (7)
- Became stronger by end of autumn, due to running around park (5,2)
- Candy bar replaced by cold beverage (6)
- Chiefly ocean resident carnivorous animal! (4)

## SUDOKU

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7		1	5					
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2	3		1					
4			7	3				
8			5					
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DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

No. SS6948 Distribution www.knightfeatures.com

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Solution to previous puzzle

9	7	5
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## IN BRIEF



## Karur Vysya Bank Q3 net rises 43% on all-round growth

Karur Vysya Bank Ltd. (KVB) reported standalone net profit for the quarter ended December registered 43% year-on-year growth to ₹412 crore on inclusive growth from all business segments. Net interest income rose by 13% to ₹1,001 crore while net interest margin slid to 4.32% (4.36%). Cost of deposits climbed 99 bps to 5.25%, the lender said. Gross non-performing assets (NPA) improved by 112 bps to 1.58% while net NPAs stood at 0.42%, down 48 bps.

## China said to move to support yuan as stock markets tumble

China's major state-owned banks moved to support the yuan on Monday, tightening liquidity in the offshore foreign exchange market while actively selling U.S. dollars onshore as equities slid, four sources with knowledge of the matter said. The goal was to prevent the yuan from falling too fast as China's A shares plunged, said one of the people, with the benchmark Shanghai Composite index posting its biggest one-day drop since April 2022 on Monday, down 2.7%. REUTERS

## Tata Motors to start making EVs at Sanand unit from April

Tata Motors plans to commence production of electric vehicles (EVs) at the Sanand plant, acquired from Ford India, from April this year, as per a top company official. Tata Passenger Electric Mobility Ltd., a unit of Tata Motors, acquired the unit from Ford India for ₹725.7 crore in January last year. "We are planning to commence electric vehicle production at Sanand with Nexus EV from April," Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles MD Shailesh Chandra said. PTI

## Sony calls off \$10 bn. merger with Zee

Sony blames Zee for not meeting closing conditions within deadline and initiates arbitration proceedings seeking \$90 million from Zee; the companies entered into a merger agreement in Dec. 2021 but could not consummate the deal even after more than two years of negotiations

**The Hindu Bureau**  
MUMBAI

Sony Pictures Networks India, which is now known as Culver Max Entertainment Pvt. Ltd. and its entity Bangla Entertainment Pvt. Ltd. (BEPL) on Monday called off the \$10 billion merger deal with Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd. (ZEEL) blaming ZEEL for not meeting closing conditions within the deadline. The Japanese company has also initiated arbitration

proceedings against ZEEL and has sought a fee of \$90 million from ZEEL for termination of the deal.

ZEEL on its part has denied the allegations and said it would take legal steps to protect its interests.

The companies had entered into an agreement for the merger dated December 22, 2021.

In a statement issued on Monday, Sony said, "Although we engaged in good faith discussions to extend the end date under the



**Next step:** ZEEL on its part has denied the allegations and said it would take legal steps to protect its interests. REUTERS

merger cooperation agreement, we were unable to agree upon an extension

tremendously disappointed that closing conditions to the merger were not satisfied by the end dates."

"We remain committed to growing our presence in this vibrant and fast-growing market and delivering world-class entertainment to Indian audiences," the company added.

ZEEL board on Monday took on record the communications received.

"ZEEL categorically denies all the assertions raised by Culver Max and BEPL on the alleged

breaches under the terms of the MCA, including their claims for the termination fee," the company said in a filing with stock exchanges.

"The Board of Directors noted that all efforts and steps were taken by ZEEL in line with the Merger Cooperation Agreement. ZEEL has consistently worked towards the implementation of the scheme in the interest of shareholders..ZEEL also held several deliberations and good faith negotiations with Culver Max" ZEEL added.

## Renault eyes higher sales growth in India

**Mini Tejaswi**  
BENGALURU



Venkatram Mamillapalle

Renault is planning to grow its India business by an additional 20% in 2024 to compensate for the slow growth it saw in the country in the earlier year, the French automaker said on Monday.

"This calendar year versus last year we are looking at an additional growth of 20%," Venkatram Mamillapalle, CEO, Renault India, told *The Hindu*. "Renault last year saw low volumes and the reason could be that we haven't refreshed our products. But this year we have added a lot of value and safety features to our models without extra cost," he added.

Commenting on the market outlook, Mr. Mamillapalle said, SUVs were on a growth mode while sales of small segment cars was declining. "Reasons could be multiple as to why small car sales are on a decline. People's buying power has increased and used upper segment cars are playing a role in the entry segment instead of small cars," he said.

## 'Tech enterprises scouting for global talent to expand footprint'

**The Hindu Bureau**  
BENGALURU



Tech enterprises are looking at newer geographies to scout for talent, to forge collaborations, expand their addressable markets and also to increase competitive advantage, industry body Nasscom said in a study in association with Indeed on Monday.

Companies are focusing on geographical expansion to explore talent in new markets, to gain competitive advantage and market access, Nasscom said.

Industry is also looking at expanding across Tier 2/3 cities in India as service-based organisations with revenue less than ₹25 crore, and GCCs (global capabili-

ty centres) look to harness untapped innovation potential found in diverse talent pools in these emerging technology hubs.

While talent availability and cost savings are primary drivers for this phenomenon among smaller organisations with revenue less than ₹25 crore, for larger tech firms with a re-

venue of more than ₹ 250 crore, the key drivers were the availability of diverse skill sets and untapped talent, Nasscom added.

The study titled "Future of Work - Unravelling the Intricacies of New-Gen Work," argues that the workforce of the future is set to navigate an increasingly multi-generational landscape. Driven by fresh perspectives and innovative ideas, Generation Z, Millennials, and the future workforce will reshape strategies for employee engagement, retention, and acquisition, and set new benchmarks.

As the dynamics of job roles continue to evolve, the majority of organisa-

tions are adopting a hybrid and flexible work approach, with office attendance guided by organisational needs and job profiles, says Nasscom.

Further to equip themselves for the future of work, enterprises are increasingly embracing new technologies, leading to a growing demand for specialist roles such as AI/ML Scientists, Quantum Computing Researchers, Quantum AI Developers, and Blockchain Specialists, Nasscom's study reported.

Among the sought-after job roles, data analytics is in the lead, followed by positions that enhance customer experiences, automation and efficiencies.

## Banks to go in for big ATM push in the next 12-18 months, industry estimates

**K. Ram Kumar**  
MUMBAI

Banks are likely to see a big ATM refresh-cum-addition cycle in the next 12-18 months, involving replacement of about 40,000 ageing ATMs, and expansion of network by about 10,000, per industry

estimates.

All scheduled banks collectively added 4,452 ATMs (automated teller machines) in FY23, with their network standing at 2,19,513 as of March-end 2023, per RBI data.

White label ATM operators expanded their ATM network by 4,292 ATMs in

FY23 to 35,791 as at March-end 2023.

"There will be a lot of churn in the ATM estate because many machines are ageing. They have to be refreshed. There are lots of regulations around ATM hardware and software now, making banks change old ATMs quickly," Manju-

nath Rao, President - Managed Services, CMS Infosystems said.

He observed that in the first half of FY24, there were bank ATM mandates for 15,000 units. This reflects their focus on replacement and network expansion.

"Private sector banks

are moving from cash dispensers to cash recyclers as it will help reduce branch walk-ins for deposits. This will reduce the overall operating cost. So, this has caught their fancy.

"And, public sector banks (PSBs) are not far off. So, some of the major PSBs also, side-by-side, are putting cash recyclers," Mr. Rao said.

During 2022-23, the total number of ATMs (on-site and off-site) grew by 3.5%, primarily driven by increase in the number of white-label ATMs, according to the RBI's latest Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India.

Commercial Banks (SCBs) at end-March 2023, the share of PSBs and PVBs was 63% and 35%, respectively.

At end-March 2023, ATMs of PSBs were more evenly distributed across geographies than other bank groups.

(The writer is with The Hindu businessline)

## Govt. expands financial services scope at IFSC

**Press Trust of India**

NEW DELHI

The government has expanded the scope of activities that can be undertaken at the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) by including services such as book keeping, and accounting.

As per a notification from the Finance Ministry, many services, including book-keeping, accounting, taxation, and financial crime compliance, have been included as part of financial services.

"Provided that the financial services shall be offered by units in an International Financial Service Centre regulated by the International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA) to non-residents whose business is not set up either by splitting up of business already in existence in India; or reconstructing/reorganising of business already in existence in India," it said in a notification on January 18.

The notification stipulates the units should not offer services by way of transferring or receiving existing contracts or work arrangements from their group entities in India.

**PUNJAB STATE POWER CORPORATION LTD.**  
Regd. Office: PSEB Head Office, The Mall, Patiala  
Corporate Identification Number: U40105PB2010SGC053813, Website: www.pspcl.in  
(Contact Number: 95461-18774)

RFP/Tender Enquiry No. MQP-23/2023-24/PO(M) Dated: 19.01.2024

Chief Engineer/Metering, C-3, Shakti Vihar, PSPCL, Patiala, invites E-tender for Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning, Reading, Analysis, Integration with billing system and 1 year O & M of Power Quality Meters complying to IEC 61000-4-30 class A. For detailed NIT and tender specification, please refer to <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> from date of publication.

Note: Corrigendum and addendum, if any will be published online at <https://eproc.punjab.gov.in> C-54/24

76155/12/2624/2023/31650

**MISSING PERSON**  
Shibu, Age-42, S/o Thampi, now residing at RC palli Veedu, Kariyam, Chellamangalam ward, Pangappa village is the Missing person in Crime 1130/22, U/s 57 of KP Act in Museum Police Station, Thiruvananthapuram City, Kerala State.  
Identification Details: 5 feet height Dark colour, Stout body, Missing upper front teeth.  
If traced out any information received about above person please contact on shomsmtv.m.pol@kerala.gov.in.  
Inspector SHO, 9497987006, SI of Police, 9497980039  
Museum Police Station 0471 2315096 21/F2/2024/I&PRD

**Department for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens**  
Podium Block, V.V.Tower, Ground Floor, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bangalore 560 001, Telephone No. 080-22866066, 080-22866046 Email Address : [dirdwscka@gmail.com](mailto:dirdwscka@gmail.com)  
No: DEDASC/2023-24/IND0014 (Call-2) Date : 22.01.2024

**SHORT TERM RE-TENDER NOTIFICATION**  
(Through E-Procurement only)

Tender is invited by the Director, Department for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, under e-Procurement platform/e-portal in two parts (i.e., Technical bid and Financial bid) system from the original vehicle equipment manufacturers or their authorized dealers for supply of approximate 4000 Motorised Two Wheeler 124CC and above (Gearless) (Tubeless Tyre) (BS-VI) with Retrofitment of additional two wheels attachment for the use of severely affected orthopedically handicapped persons for the year 2023-24 (Approximate bid amount is Rs.3600.00 Lakh). The interesting bidders may see further details and may login in website : [www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in](http://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in)

The tender can be submitted on or before 29.01.2024 till 04.30 p.m., the technical bid will be opened on 30.01.2024 at 03.02.2024 at 12.00 p.m. Department reserves all rights to accept, reject, incorporate changes and retender without giving any reasons. The details can be obtained from the Department for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, Podium Block, V.V. Tower, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Veedhi, Bengaluru-560001, Phone: 080-22860907. For more info please see department website [www.dwdsc.karnataka.gov.in](http://www.dwdsc.karnataka.gov.in)

Sd/- Assistant Director, Department for the Empowerment of Differently Abled and Senior Citizens, Bengaluru.

DIPR/CP/RO/3186/2023-24

**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
Commissionerate of Agriculture, Seshadri Road, Bengaluru – 560001  
No.: DDA(FM&MI)/FM Rfp/Kisan Drone/2023-24 Date: 18.01.2024

**SHORT TERM PROPOSAL NOTIFICATION**  
The Department of Agriculture invites Short Term Request for Proposals (RFP) from OEM / Manufacturers for supply of Kisan Drones under Departmental subsidy Programmes. The OEM / Manufacturers who are interested to participate in this RFP can submit their proposals through e-Procurement platform <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>. The interested OEM / Manufacturers can download the Rfp document through e-Procurement platform at free of cost by payment of applicable e-Procurement processing fees and the EMD amount as fixed by the Department. Applications for RFP can be downloaded from the website <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> from 23.01.2024 to 06.02.2024. The last date for submission of proposals in e-Procurement platform is 06.02.2024, 4:30 p.m.

The Hard copies (Physical Deposition) of the Technical and Financial Proposals along with other relevant documents uploaded in the e-Procurement portal will be received at the Office of the Deputy Director of Agriculture (Farm Mechanization & Micro irrigation), Department of Agriculture, Seshadri Road, Bengaluru-560001 upto 4:30 p.m., on Dt: 07.02.2024.

The Technical proposals will be opened on 08.02.2024 at 11:00 a.m. in Samruddhi VC Hall, Commissionerate of agriculture, Seshadri Road, Bengaluru-560001.

The interested Manufacturers / OEM have to register at the e-procurement cell, Centre for e-Governance, 4th Floor, Sri Arvinda Bhavan, Mythic Society Compound, Nrupatunga Road, Bengaluru-560001 and obtain the DSC key or e-token (Helpdesk: +91 80 46010000, +91 80 68948777).

NOTE: e-Procurement processing fee is non-refundable and Tender documents are non transferable.

Sd/-, Director of Agriculture and Tender Inviting Authority

DIPR/CP/LC/3168/2023-24

**ACES SPORTS QUIZ**

**SPORTSTAR ACES**  
2024 INDIA TRIUMPHS  
#SSaces2024

Scan the QR code, take part in the quiz and vote for your favourite stars.  
Top 3 winners every day will win gift vouchers.

**1. Recently, the Indian women's cricket team achieved a historic 347-run victory in a Test match. This remarkable win marks the highest margin in the history of women's Tests. Against which team did they secure this triumph?**

**2. Name the player who recently earned the title of the oldest participant in the Open Era to reach a men's doubles Grand Slam final, accomplishing this feat at the 2023 US Open.**

**3. Which chess player won the 2023 Chennai Masters tournament?**

Answer to yesterday quiz:  
1. MOTO GP  
2. CHENNAI SUPER QUEENS  
3. R PRAGGNANANDHA

**Uttar Pradesh University of Medical Sciences**  
Saifai, Etawah-206130 (UP)  
Ref no. 1834/MM-Dept/UPUMS/23-24  
Dated: 20.01.2024

**NOTICE INVITING E-TENDER**

1. Uttar Pradesh University of Medical Sciences Saifai Etawah hereby invited online bids/ tenders for Installation and Operation of CT Scan Machine, 1.5 Tesla MRI Machine and 1000 mA Digital X Ray Machine Dual Detector Services on PPP Basis under E-Tendering procurement rules in two cover system.
2. Important Information & dates of tender documents for open E-Tenders are available on website <http://etender.up.nic.in>. Bid documents shall be submitted online mode only.

Vice Chancellor

## KYIV

Zelenskyy proposes Ukrainian citizenship for foreign fighters



President Volodymyr Zelenskyy announced draft legislation that could pave the way for foreigners fighting against Russia in his country to receive Ukrainian citizenship. Thousands of foreigners rushed at the beginning of Russia's invasion of Ukraine to help fend off Moscow's forces trying to wrest control of the country. AFP

## BEIJING

Dozens buried, eight confirmed killed in southwest China landslip



Dozens of people were buried and eight confirmed killed when a landslip struck a remote and mountainous part of southwestern China on Monday. The pre-dawn landslip buried 18 homes and sparked the evacuation of more than 200 people when it struck in the Zhenxiong region of Yunnan province. AFP

Iran Guards killed in 'Israel strike' in Syria put to rest

**Agence France-Presse**  
TEHRAN

Hundreds of mourners gathered on Monday in Tehran for the funerals of Revolutionary Guards killed in Syria, in what Iran called an Israeli strike.

It was the latest incident adding to regional tensions and fears of wider conflagration during the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza.

The strike in Damascus on Saturday killed five members of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the military force said. Iranian media later reported the victims included the group's intelligence chief for Syria, and his deputy.

A total of 13 persons were killed, said the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights war monitor, which has a network of sources in the country.

## Iran and Pakistan envoys to return to duty as ties improve

Ambassadors of both countries will return to their respective posts by Friday; Iran Foreign Minister to visit Islamabad next week on invitation from his Pakistani counterpart

**Agence France-Presse**  
TEHRAN

Iran and Pakistan announced on Monday that their Ambassadors would resume their duties after the two countries agreed to de-escalate tensions following an exchange of deadly strikes last week.

"It has been mutually agreed that the Ambassadors of both countries may return to their respective posts by January 26," said a joint statement by the Foreign Ministries in Tehran and Islamabad.

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian is also due to visit Pakistan on January 29 following an invitation from his Pakistani counterpart Jalil Abbas Jilani, the statement said.



**Thorny ties:** Iran and Pakistan had exchanged deadly strikes last week as a fallout of the Israel-Hamas war. AFP

The decisions were announced following a phone call between Mr. Jilani and Mr. Amir-Abdollahian.

Pakistan launched on Thursday airstrikes on "militant targets" in Iran, two days after similar Ira-

nian strikes on its territory.

Tehran said its strikes in Pakistan targeted Jaish al-Adl, a jihadist group which has carried out a spate of deadly attacks in Iran in recent months.

Formed in 2012, the group is blacklisted by Iran

## BERLIN

Far-right AfD leader says Brexit vote is a 'model for Germany'



The co-leader of the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party said on Monday that the Brexit vote was an example to follow for the EU's most populous country. "It is a model for Germany, that one can make a sovereign decision like that," Alice Weidel said while also adding that it would address a "democratic deficit". AFP

## ISLAMABAD

Three Pakistan universities shut over security threats, say police



Three universities affiliated with Pakistan's military were shut over security threats in the capital Islamabad on Monday in the run-up to the elections that are due in two weeks. A police official said the National Defence University, the Bahria University and the Air University in Islamabad were shut due to potential threats. AFP

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## Ron DeSantis ends his U.S. presidential bid, Haley sole contestant against Trump

**Associated Press**  
MANCHESTER



Ron DeSantis

campaigning stop in Seabrook, New Hampshire, just as Mr. DeSantis announced his decision.

"He ran a great race, he has been a good Governor, and we wish him well," she told a room packed with supporters and media. "Having said that, it's now one fella and one lady left."

Mr. DeSantis's decision, while perhaps not surprising given his 30-point blowout loss last week in Iowa, marks the end of an extraordinary decline for a high-profile Governor once thought to be a legitimate threat to Mr. Trump in the Republican Party. After months of contentious exchanges, Mr. Trump struck a more conciliatory tone on Sunday during a rally in Rochester, New Hampshire, calling Mr. DeSantis a "really terrific person."

Florida Governor Ron DeSantis suspended his Republican presidential campaign on Sunday, ending his 2024 White House bid just before the New Hampshire primary while endorsing his bitter rival Donald Trump.

The decision leaves Mr. Trump and former UN Ambassador Nikki Haley as the last major candidates remaining in the race ahead of Tuesday's New Hampshire primary.

But as some Trump critics cheered, Mr. DeSantis nodded toward Mr. Trump's primary dominance – and attacked Ms. Haley – in an exit video.

"It is clear to me that a majority of Republican primary voters want to

## Russia blames Kyiv for attack on gas terminal at Baltic Sea port

**Agence France-Presse**  
MOSCOW

news to show its bestial face. They are striking civil infrastructure, people," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said. The gas terminal is more than 850 km from Ukraine. The fire was the latest in a series of apparent Ukrainian attacks on Russia's energy facilities.

A gas facility belonging to Novatek, Russia's largest exporter of LNG, was set ablaze on Sunday in the western port town, close to Russia's border with Estonia.

"The Kyiv regime contin-

Families of hostages urge Israel PM to seek a deal with Hamas

**Agence France-Presse**  
GAZA STRIP

fierce fighting between Israeli soldiers and Hamas militants. The war has spurred fears of a wider escalation, and sirens were heard again overnight in northern Israel near the border with Lebanon, according to the Israeli military.

Relatives and supporters of the hostages again rallied near Mr. Netanyahu's Jerusalem residence in Jerusalem on Sunday night for their return.

Witnesses reported deadly strikes overnight in Khan Younis, the largest city in southern Gaza, and

## Taliban enforcing restrictions on single, unaccompanied Afghan women: UN

**Associated Press**  
ISLAMABAD

**In one incident, officials advised a woman to get married if she wanted to keep her job at a healthcare facility**

The Taliban have barred women from most areas of public life and stopped girls from going to school beyond the sixth grade as part of harsh measures they imposed after taking power in 2021, despite ini-

ally promising more moderate rule.

They have also shut down beauty parlors and started enforcing a dress code, arresting women who do not comply with their interpretation of hijab, or Islamic headscarf. In May 2022, the Taliban issued a decree calling for women to only show their eyes and recommending they wear the head-to-toe burqa.

In its latest quarterly report, covering October to December last year, the UN

Assistance Mission in Afghanistan said the Taliban are cracking down on Afghan women who are single or do not have a male guardian, or mahram, accompanying them.

**Unsaid rule**

There are no official laws about male guardianship in Afghanistan, but the Taliban said women cannot move around or travel a certain distance without a man who is related to her by blood or marriage.

## India will need a win and some luck

**AFC ASIAN CUP**

**Neeladri Bhattacharjee**  
DOHA

India will look to beat the odds and hope for qualification into the knockouts when it faces Syria in its last group-stage game of the AFC Asian Cup 2023, at the Al Bayt Stadium, on Tuesday.

The Blue Tigers were left chasing shadows against Uzbekistan in their previous game, losing the match 0-3, which made their chances of progressing, almost impossible. They will now have to beat Syria and wait for results in other groups to qualify as one of the four best third-placed teams.

The good news for Igor



**Last try:** India will have to rely on other results to qualify for the knockouts. X@INDIANFOOTBALL

Stimac's side is the availability of a full squad for the match.

"We are still focused and well-concentrated on what we could achieve and do here tomorrow. So, all the boys here will do everything possible. Is that going to be enough? We're

not sure, that's in God's hands. But hopefully, we are going to use one of our chances," Stimac said.

Syria, on the other hand, has been a defensively industrious side like a typical Hector Cuper team. Under the Argentinian, who guided Egypt to

the FIFA World Cup in 2018, Syria has lost just one game with a margin of more than one goal. It held Uzbekistan to a draw, lost 0-1 to Australia, and sits third in the standings, above India. A win can propel it to second if Uzbekistan lose to Socceros and Syria ends the group stage with a higher goal difference than Srejko Katanec's side.

In the other Group B game, Uzbekistan will look for revenge when it meets Australia at the Asian Cup after four years. The Uzbeks were knocked out by the Socceros through a 4-2 win on penalties in the round-of-16 of the 2019 Asian Cup. Both games are scheduled for a 5 p.m. IST kick-off, with Australia facing Uzbekistan at the Al Janoub Stadium.

Pakistan men fail to qualify for Olympics

**HOCKEY**

**Press Trust of India**  
KARACHI

Pakistan's embattled men's hockey team has failed to qualify for the Olympic Games for a third consecutive time after losing its final shot at a Paris ticket in the FIH Qualifiers in Oman.

After losing 0-4 to Germany in the tournament's semifinal, Pakistan went down 2-3 to New Zealand in the third-place match last night, ending its chances of making it to the Olympics. Pakistan's last Olympic appearance was in the 2012 Games where the team signed off seventh.

World championships bronze medal winning boxer Mohammad Hussamuddin, who was out of action with a knee injury for about six months, made a comeback to the Indian squad for the Olympics World Qualification Tournament (WQT) to be held in Busto Arsizio, Italy, from February 29 to March 12.

Hussamuddin, who had injured his left knee during the World championships in Tashkent, had gone under the knife to fix his injury. His return would boost India's chances of securing a quota place in 57kg. The squad also included Worlds medallists Deepak

## Hussamuddin returns to India's WQT boxing squad

**Sports Bureau**  
KOLKATA



Hussamuddin.

Bhoria (51kg) and Nishant Dev (71kg), multiple Asian medallist Shiva Thapa (54kg), Parveen Hooda (57kg) and Lovlina Borgohain (75kg) confirming their berths at the Asian Games. The boxers will travel to Montenegro next month to participate in a multi-nation training camp. The second WQT will be held in Bangkok from May 23 to June 3.

World youth champion Arundhati Choudhary (66kg) were the boxers picked in the women's section. The boxers were selected after an evaluation process, conducted by the high-performance coaching staff based on various parameters.

India has already secured four quotas for Paris 2024 with Nikhat Zareen (50kg), Preeti Pawar (54kg), Parveen Hooda (57kg) and Lovlina Borgohain (75kg) confirming their berths at the Asian Games. The boxers will travel to Montenegro next month to participate in a multi-nation training camp. The second WQT will be held in Bangkok from May 23 to June 3.

## Sport

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## VOTE FOR YOUR SPORTSTAR OF THE YEAR (MALE)



**SPORTSTAR ACES**  
2024 INDIA TRIUMPHS  
#SSaces2024



To vote,  
scan the QR code

# Red-hot Alcaraz races into last-eight; Zverev fights through; Yastremska fends off Azarenka

Third seed Medvedev, meanwhile, made to work hard by Borges before prevailing after more than three hours; Bopanna & Ebden make the doubles quarterfinals

### AUSTRALIAN OPEN

**Agence France-Presse**  
MELBOURNE

Carlos Alcaraz demolished unseeded Serbian Miomir Kecmanovic to storm into the Australian Open quarter-finals on Monday as Daniil Medvedev stayed on track for a third final in four years.

The Spanish second seed, who will next face sixth seed Alexander Zverev, is locked in a fierce battle with Novak Djokovic for the World No. 1 spot and is also after his Melbourne crown.

The two-time Grand Slam winner produced some scintillating baseline hitting at Rod Laver Arena to sweep Kecmanovic aside 6-4, 6-4, 6-0 in one hour 49 minutes.

**Fierce challenge**  
Zverev overcame a fierce challenge from British 19th seed Cameron Norrie to pull through 7-5, 3-6, 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (10-3) in a punish-



Charging on: Alcaraz produced some scintillating baseline hitting at the Rod Laver Arena to sweep Kecmanovic aside. AFP

ing match lasting more than four hours.

He racked up 54 winners, including 15 aces, as he chases his first Grand Slam title.

Russian third seed Medvedev was made to work

hard by Portugal's Nuno Borges before prevailing 6-3, 7-6(4), 5-7, 6-1 after more than three hours.

The 27-year-old will meet Polish ninth seed Hubert Hurkacz for a place in the last four.

Big-serving Hurkacz ended the dream run of French wildcard Arthur Cazaux 7-6(6), 7-6(3), 6-4 to advance to his first quarter-final in Melbourne.

Earlier, Ukrainian qualifier Dayana Yastremska

fought off two set points in the first set and came from a break down in the second set against the two-time champion Victoria Azarenka to emerge a 7-6 (6), 6-4 winner.

Her reward is a clash

with unseeded Czech Linda Noskova, who went through when Ukraine's Elina Svitolina retired with a bad back while trailing 3-0 in the first set.

"I need to take a little bit of time to breathe because my heart I feel is going to jump out of my body," said Yastremska, who hammered Wimbledon champion Marketa Vondrousova in the first round.

"I always felt like I was running behind the train, but I think because I am a little bit of a fighter that's why I won this match."

Chinese 12th seed Zheng Qinwen routed unseeded French player Oceane Dodin 6-0, 6-3.

She will face unseeded Russian Anna Kalinskaya, who beat Italian 26th seed Jasmine Paolini 6-4, 6-2.

### Impressive

India's Rohan Bopanna and his Australian partner Matthew Ebden entered the men's doubles quarter-finals with an impressive 7-6, 7-6 victory over Wesley Koolhof of the Netherlands

### FOURTH ROUND RESULTS

**Men:** 9-Hurkacz (Pol) bt Cazaux (Fra) 7-6(6), 7-6(3), 6-4;  
3-Medvedev bt Borges (Por) 6-3, 7-6(4), 5-7, 6-1.  
6-Zverev (Ger) bt 19-Norrie (GBR) 7-5, 3-6, 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 (10-3);  
2-Alcaraz (Esp) bt Kecmanovic (Srb) 6-4, 6-4, 6-0.  
**Women:** Noskova (Cze) bt 19-Svitolina (Ukr) 3-0, retd.;  
Yastremska (Ukr) bt 18-Azarenka (Blr) 7-6(6), 6-4.  
Kalinskaya bt 26-Paolini (Ita) 6-4, 6-2; 12-Zheng (Chn) bt Dodin (Fra) 6-0, 6-3.

### Quarterfinal line-up

**Men**  
1-Djokovic (Srb) vs 12-Fritz (USA)  
4-Sinner (Ita) vs 5-Rublev  
3-Medvedev vs 9-Hurkacz (Pol)  
6-Zverev (Ger) vs 2-Alcaraz (Esp)  
**Women**  
Noskova (Cze) vs Yastremska (Ukr)  
Kalinskaya vs 12-Zheng (Chn)  
Kostyuk (Ukr) vs 24-Gauff (USA)  
9-Krejickova (Cze) vs 2-Sabalenka

**Kohli pulls out of first two Tests citing 'personal reasons'**

### Sports Bureau

Virat Kohli will not be available for India's first two Tests against England. He has withdrawn from the Tests at Hyderabad – starting on January 25 – and Visakhapatnam, citing personal reasons.

"Virat has spoken to captain Rohit Sharma, the team management and the selectors and has emphasised that while representing the country has always been his top priority, certain personal situations demand his presence and undivided attention," said a statement from the BCCI secretary Jay Shah.

"The BCCI respects his decision and the Board and team management has extended its support to the star batter and is confident in the abilities of the remaining squad members to step up and deliver commendable performances in the Test series."

**Gill, Shastri to get BCCI awards**

### Press Trust of India

Ravi Shastri will be honoured with BCCI's Lifetime Achievement Award and Shubman Gill with the Cricketer of the Year award at the BCCI Awards function here on Tuesday.



**Suryakumar is captain of ICC T20I Team of the Year**

### Press Trust of India

Suryakumar Yadav has been named the captain of the ICC men's T20I Team of the Year, which also includes three more Indians.

Among women, off-spinner Deepti Sharma is the lone Indian to find a place in the 11-member side to be led by Sri Lanka's Chamari Athapaththu.

**The teams:** **Men:** Jaiswal, Salt, Pooran (wk), Suryakumar (Capt.), Chapman, Raza, Ramjani, Adair, Bishnoi, Nagarava, Arshdeep, Mooney (wk), Wolvarta, Matthews, Sciver-Brunt, Kerr, Perry, Gardner, Deepti, Sophie, Schutt.

## Holder Odisha FC enters the last four

### SUPER CUP

#### Sports Bureau

Holder Odisha FC progressed to the semifinals of the Kalinga Super Cup defeating FC Goa 3-2 in a Group D league match in Bhubaneswar on Monday.

Ahmed Jahouh put the host in the lead before Mourtada Fall found the target twice to make it 3-0 by the 66th minute. Goa

pulled back two goals through Carlos Martinez in the 75th and 86th minutes but fell short by one goal to see the home side secure the top position in the group with full nine points.

Odisha will meet Mumbai City FC in the second semifinal on January 25.

**The result:**  
**Group D:** Odisha 3 (Jahouh 51, Fall 61, 66) bt FC Goa 2 (Martinez 75, 86). Bengaluru 1 (Javier 58) drew with Inter Kashi 1 (Lalrindika 15).

## Four-Nation tournament: Indian men open with a win over France

### HOCKEY

#### Press Trust of India

CAPE TOWN

Skipper Harmanpreet scored a brace as the Indian men's hockey team defeated France 4-0 to begin its campaign in the Four-Nation tournament on Monday.

The Indian defence produced a resolute perfor-

mance with France failing to get past veteran P.R. Sreejesh and Krishan Bahadur Pathak in the goal.

### Flurry of goals

Harmanpreet (13th, 26th minutes) converted two penalty corners while Lalit Upadhyay (42nd) and vice-captain Hardik Singh (49) were the other scorers for India.

India broke the deadlock two minutes from the first quarter through

Harmanpreet's powerful dragflick. He doubled the lead in the second quarter, converting another penalty corner.

Lalit made the scoreline 3-0 after the change of ends when he found the back of the French goal through a penalty corner variation.

In the final quarter, Hardik extended India's lead to take the game beyond France's reach by scoring a finely executed field goal.

## Khelo India Youth Games: Haryana teams win kabaddi titles; gymnasts Aaryan, Sanyukta reign



**Golden day:** The Haryana boys and girls came up with their best when it mattered to claim the crown. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT



#### Sports Bureau

CHENNAI

Haryana bagged a 'double' in kabaddi, by clinching the boys' and girls' titles in the sixth Khelo India Youth Games held on Monday.

In the boys' final, Haryana defeated Rajasthan 43-28 while the girls outwitted Tamil Nadu 40-33 in the summit clash.

**Other results:** Cycling (finals):

**Boys: Time trial (1km):** 1. Aashirwad Saxena (TS) 1:12.652; 2. Vedant Jadhav (Mah) 1:13.362; 3. Gurmoor Poonia (Har) 1:14.192; **Team sprint:** 1. Kerala 1:09.856; 2. Maharashtra 1:10.434; 3. TN 1:11.156.

**Girls: Time Trial (500m):** 1. J. Srithathi (TN) 39.752; 2. Vimla (Raj) 40.211; 3. R. Tamilarasi 41.028; **Team Sprint:** 1. TN 1:20.528; 3. Maharashtra 1:20.814.

**Gymnastics (finals): Boys:**

**Artistic: All-Round:** 1. Aaryan (Kerala) 1:09.856; 2. Mahesh Kumar (Tamil Nadu) 1:10.434; 3. TN 1:11.156.

**Boys: Group A:** Mizoram bt Tamil Nadu 7-0; **Boys: Group B:** Punjab bt Tamil Nadu 2-1.

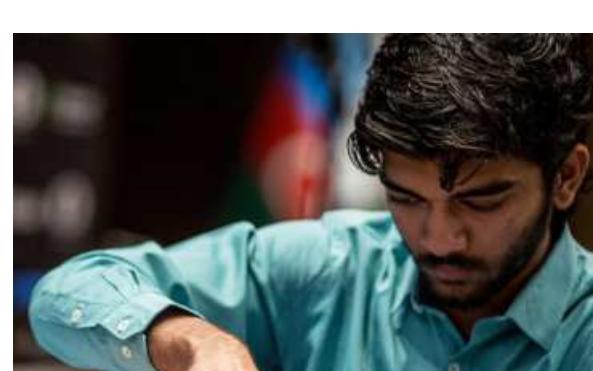
**Squash: Boys: (semifinals):** Tanveet Singh Mund (MP) bt Pravesh (TN) 11-6, 10-12, 12-14, 11-8, 11-6.

**Girls: (semifinals):** R. Pooja Arthi (TN) bt V. Deepika (TN) 11-5.

**1. Darjada Shahin (Guj); 2. Rupanshi Rupanshi (HP); 3. Nikita Nikita (Har); Shaan Shaan (Har).**

**Yogasana: Artistic: Singles:** **Boys:** Rohan Sunil (Mah); 2. S. Chittesh (TN); 3. Swaraj Sunny Fiske (Mah); **Girls:** Rudrakshi Pankaj Bhave (Mah); 2. Tejaswini Jagdishrai Khinch (Mah); 3. Pranjali Somnath Vhanna (Mah).

**In Coimbatore: Basketball:** **Boys: Group A:** Punjab bt Mizoram 105-66; UP bt MP 106-83. **Boys: Group B:** Chhattisgarh bt UP 81-50.



Plotting the moves: Gukesh drew with Ju Wenjun. FILE PHOTO

## Gukesh stays in joint lead in Masters

### CHESS

#### Sports Bureau

D. Gukesh ran into Women World champion Ju Wenjun's resolute defence and drew only his second game in eight rounds of the Tata Steel Masters chess tournament at Wijk aan Zee on Sunday.

The Indian youngster stayed in joint lead at five points with Anish Giri and the man who rejoined the lead, Alireza Firouzja.

While Gukesh and Anish were involved in drawn encounters, Firouzja added to the woes of World champion Ding Liren by inflicting a 43-move defeat. That meant both World champions from China were at 3.5 points before the action resumed on Tuesday after a day of rest.

Vidit Gujarathi and R. Praggnanandhaa also drew their games and moved to 4.5 points – half-a-point behind the leading trio.

Ian Nepomniachtchi nailed Uzbek youngster Nodirbek Abdusattarov (Uzb, 4.5); Jorden van Foreest (Ned, 3) drew with Parham Maghsoudloo (Iri, 2.5).

**Challengers:** Anton Korobov (Ukr, 4.5) lost to Leon Mendonca (5); Divya Deshmukh (3.5) bt Eline Roebers (Ned, 2); Jaime Santos Latasa (Esp, 4.5) drew with D. Harika (3.5); Saleh Salem (UAE, 5) lost to Marc Andria Maurizzi (Fra, 5.5); Hans Moke Niemann (AUS, 4) drew with Erwin L'Ami (Ned, 5); Mustafa Yilmaz (Tur, 3) lost to Daniel Dardha (Bel, 4.5); Liam Vrolijk (Ned, 3.5) drew with Stefan Beukema (Bel, 2.5).

**Suryakumar is captain of ICC T20I Team of the Year**

### Press Trust of India

Suryakumar Yadav has been named the captain of the ICC men's T20I Team of the Year, which also includes three more Indians.

Among women, off-spinner Deepti Sharma is the lone Indian to find a place in the 11-member side to be led by Sri Lanka's Chamari Athapaththu.

**The teams:** **Men:** Jaiswal, Salt, Pooran (wk), Suryakumar (Capt.), Chapman, Raza, Ramjani, Adair, Bishnoi, Nagarava, Arshdeep, Mooney (wk), Wolvarta, Matthews, Sciver-Brunt, Kerr, Perry, Gardner, Deepti, Sophie, Schutt.



# Tendulkar & Co. get back on the field for a humanitarian cause

Star cricketers from eight countries were in strength, playing a T20 match to promote the message 'One World One Family' and throw light on the work being done to provide nutrition, education and health care to needy children, free of cost



SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

## Kamesh Srinivasan

**F**or the 2000-odd school kids assembled at the Sai Krishnan stadium in Muddenahalli in Karnataka, it was a rare privilege to watch Sachin Tendulkar in action.

The venue itself had a capacity of only about 3,500, but Tendulkar and the other star cricketers from eight countries were in strength, playing a T20 match to inspire the children, entertaining everyone in the process.

The focus was to promote the message *Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam* – One World One Family. More than that, the aim was to throw light on the work being done in the region for providing nutrition, education and health care to needy children, free of cost.

"It is a huge honour to be part of this special occasion. I see lots of school kids. It was naughty in school. These kids are so disciplined. My parents were concerned about me, and put me in cricket. There is enough encouragement to channelise energy in the right direction. My focus was to play for India," said Tendulkar, addressing the fans before the start of the match.

Over the years, Tendulkar has inspired millions around the world. He was keen to put the right thoughts in the young minds.

"I did well, and I failed also. There were ups and downs. Sport taught me to get up and fight. Compete in a fair way. When challenged, don't try to find the short cuts," said Tendulkar.

He drove home the point for everyone. "We need to be a healthy and fit nation. We are the diabetic capital of the world. Pick any sport of your choice and engage yourself. You need not become a professional athlete. You can be a fit doctor, or a fit engineer, a fitter version of yourself," Tendulkar said.

He had wholehearted praise for Sadguru Sri Madhusudan Sai for his vision and humanitarian work, especially in having world class hospitals, providing free treatment to those in need.

"We are here to contribute whatever we can," said Tendulkar.

He gave cricket kits to a few kids as part of the drive to provide 1000 children sporting equipment to keep them engaged in sports.

"Together we are here for others. There is no greater satisfaction than to contribute in whatever way possible to support such efforts, as they are doing amazing work with education, nutrition and health care," said Tendulkar, who captained one of the teams.

The match was memorable with Irfan Pathan hitting the winning six for One World, off the bowling of his brother Yusuf Pathan.

Sunil Gavaskar summed up beautifully by appreciating, "the camaraderie and the spirit in which the match was played. The final ball of the match, one brother hit the bowling of another brother. It was One World, One Family," said Gavaskar.

before announcing the individual prizes for Darren Maddi, Chaminda Vas, Md. Kaif and Alviro Petersen.

Thanking all the cricketers for finding time and joining hands, Madhusudan Sai had special words for the one Gavaskar introduced as, "the one and only Sachin Tendulkar".

"Sunil Gavaskar did everything to organise the match. Sachin Tendulkar said *Guruvar* (Thursday). He selected the date and came here. Hundred plus countries are participating. So many greats, best in their field are joining hands. In a family, it is not about the survival of the fittest. It is about the survival of the weakest. When families get together, it is celebration. The joy of playing sport is important," said Madhusudan Sai.

While the cricketers came together for a day, Gavaskar has been promoting the cause around the world in a quiet way.

"My memory of Sunil Gavaskar's 10,000 runs in Tests is still fresh. People were celebrating and distributing sweets, bursting fire crackers. Sunil, he talks to people wherever he may be. Makes people aware of the initiatives.

"He has helped get millions of dollars' support for the cause. That is the side so dear to me. He is a citizen of the world, inspires so many people," said Madhusudan Sai.

Despite all the commendable work being done, the driving force for such a mammoth task was particularly emphatic

about providing children with nutrition in the morning.

"Children wait for midday meals. The first meal is important. We give breakfast to millions of children so that they have the energy to educate themselves. It is hard to study on empty stomachs. Their last meal would have been the previous day. There is a huge loss of human capital if we don't nurture the children well. We need to support children physically, mentally and emotionally. It is the responsibility of every citizen", he said.

It may be hard to imagine the magnitude of work and support being extended. Yet, the soft spoken guru drove home the point, "if your thoughts are good, the whole Universe joins you. Where there is a will, there is a way," he said.

Yuvraj Singh, who captained one of the teams, and jokingly complained that Sachin Tendulkar had kept all the younger players in his side, was happy to be present for the cause.

"We are all here for a good cause. Free nutrition, education and medical care. We run the Yuvi Foundation. We know the challenges. Heard about it, and happy to be part of it and contribute," he said.

"Wonderful to be part of the initiative. India has developed in excellence. Happy to come back and play, and give back to society. We are grateful to do it. It is very important. Am in love with the incredible India," said Danny Morrison.

Venkatesh Prasad, ever so fit, was

happy to be back among the greats of the game.

"Sadguru Madhusudan Sai doing a great job. So many initiatives in 33 countries. Amazing phenomenon. Great to be part of this," said Prasad.

Recalling Nelson Mandela's message and the friendship between India and South Africa, Mkhaya Ntini expressed gratitude to India for "bringing everyone together through the IPL". He added that it felt "great" to be part of such a noble exercise.

There were interesting tips for the youngsters.

"Run every morning. Do the push ups, sit ups etc.," said Morrison, while Yuvraj said that he was happy to be "walking and playing golf".

Prasad was candid.

"As you grow old, you need discipline. Eat the right kind of food. Minimise eating. I take only two meals a day," said Prasad. "We are all here from different parts of the world, different cultures, different beliefs, different faith. We are one human race. Learn to live as one family. I am grateful for being given the opportunity to organise the match. The players responded great. One phone call, or one email was all it required to get these players here," said Gavaskar.

There was a vibrant dance performance to start the match, and there was a full fledged Sai Orchestra enthralled the packed Premamrutham auditorium before the presentation ceremony.

"Sports and music have universal language. On a given day, you may not be the best. Your opponent may be better. You may be aiming for the sky, as individuals and as teams. On a given day, the other person, or team, may be a little better. We respect, show admiration for the performances of each other as opponents. We learn that, in life, one cannot always win. We accept the shortcomings. Next time you can win," said Gavaskar.

Some of the other cricketers were Harbhajan Singh, Muthiah Muralidharan, Monty Panesar, R.P. Singh, Upul Tharanga, Romesh Kaluwitharna, Parthiv Patel, Naman Ojha, Ashoke Dinda and Ajantha Mendis.

It was indeed a star parade of cricketers, on a special day to celebrate the G20 theme that everyone present at the venue, that is expected to turn into a sports hub, would remember fondly.

"Love each other. Serve each other. Do not hurt each other. G20 motto is our mission. The message needs to be told over and over again. We are a cricket loving nation. Cricket is a religion. Cricketers are Gods. Youngsters will learn easily from them," said Madhusudan Sai.

No task is impossible, if people get together and put their heart and soul into executing it.

"Who knows, who gets inspired!" said Madhusudan Sai, happy to have made Satya Sai Grama an abode for Tendulkar and company.



G.R. Viswanath, along with captains Yuvraj and Tendulkar.

## THE GIST

▼ The match was memorable with Irfan Pathan hitting the winning six for One World, off the bowling of his brother Yusuf Pathan

▼ Gavaskar, the driving force of the event, was particularly emphatic about providing children with nutrition in the morning

▼ Harbhajan, Muralidharan, Panesar, R.P. Singh, Tharanga, Kaluwitharna, Parthiv Patel, Ojha, Dinda and Mendis were among the stars that showed up

# SCIENCE

## Jammu CSIR lab finds cannabis compound that has antibiotic effects

CSIR-IIIM Jammu researchers have found a compound, THCBD, to have potent antibiotic effects against *Staphylococcus aureus*, a bacteria responsible for the second most number of deaths due to anti-microbial resistance, whereby microbes stop responding to medicines, worldwide

Hirra Azmat  
SRINAGAR

**C**annabis has the potential to make a dent in India's fight against the escalating threat of antibiotic resistance.

Scientists at CSIR-Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine (IIIM), Jammu, have found that phytocannabinoids, a class of compounds found in the cannabis plant, possess some hitherto unexplored antibiotic properties.

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is a major health concern worldwide. It refers to when bacteria, viruses, fungi, and parasites no longer respond to medicines used to treat them.

According to Sanghapal D. Sawant, a senior principal scientist at the CSIR-National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), Pune, bacteria have developed certain sophisticated 'shields' over many decades to resist the effects of antibiotic medications.

These include the formation of biofilms - thin sheets of bacterial colonies that are more resistant to antibiotics than when separated - and cellular mechanisms called efflux pumps that flush drugs out from cells.

The resulting AMR increases the risk of disease spread, severe illness, and death.

### What is India's AMR burden?

According to one estimate, India reported 2.97 lakh deaths in 2019 that could be attributed to AMR and 10.42 lakh others that could be associated with AMR.

Reports have also flagged the overuse of antibiotics in India, their misuse in animal husbandry, and poor waste disposal for engendering AMR and potentially rendering India the "AMR capital of the world".

For these reasons, medical researchers are keen to tamp down AMR and find new drugs that fight AMR pathogens.

In the new study, published in the journal ACS *Infectious Diseases*, IIIM researchers tested the antibacterial properties of tetrahydrocannabidiol (THCBD), a semisynthetic phytocannabinoid, against *Staphylococcus aureus*, the bacteria responsible for the second most number of deaths due to AMR worldwide.

### Need for 'alternative solutions'

Antibiotics are chemical compounds isolated from one microorganism and used to kill another. They have saved millions of lives since their discovery but are failing short against AMR bacteria.

"*S. aureus* includes a strain known as MRSA, for methicillin-resistant *S. aureus*, resistant to the last line of antibiotics called methicillin," Parvinder Pal Singh, principal scientist at IIIM researcher and the study's corresponding author, said. "While numerous antibiotics exist for *S. aureus*, the emergence of the MRSA strain necessitates alternative solutions."

The study revealed THCBD obtained from cannabis could fight MRSA. "We tested this molecule on eight to ten different resistant strains of *S. aureus*, indicating its potential through a distinct mechanism, and offering a promising avenue for further investigation."

### How is THCBD made?

Cannabinoids are a class of compounds found in the cannabis plant. The prefix 'phyto' in phytocannabinoid means it comes from a plant. Cannabinoids bind to receptors in the bodies of animals to



Cannabis being grown in controlled conditions in CSIR-IIIM Jammu. HIRRA AZMAT

produce a variety of neurological effects.

The researchers extracted cannabidiol from a cannabis plant and made it react with hydrogen, using palladium as a catalyst. This process yielded a mixture of molecules with the same composition and order of atoms but different structures. One of them was THCBD.

### What were THCBD's effects?

Then the researchers tested THCBD against bacterial cultures in the lab. The minimum quantity found to be efficacious against a strain of Gram-positive *S. aureus* used commonly in AMR research was found to be 0.25 µg/ml, which the researchers called "potent".

They found THCBD "demonstrated strong effectiveness" against efflux pump overexpression and MRSA strains.

They also wrote THCBD "significantly reduced" the number of viable microbial cells of *S. aureus* skin infections in mice.

Finally, they found that the compound either complemented or was indifferent to the effects of other common antibiotics like mupirocin, penicillin G, and ciprofloxacin, meaning they could be used together.

"While we have identified a promising candidate, the journey to transforming it into a viable drug involves overcoming additional hurdles," Dr Singh said. "The establishment of a comprehensive safety profile is a crucial step that remains to be seen. Moving forward, our focus will include addressing these issues to develop an improved and safer molecule for potential drug applications."

### Is THCBD well-studied?

Nonetheless, Showkat Rashid, a senior scientist at the Medicinal Chemistry Division of IIIM, called the study "very exciting" and "thought-provoking".

"On one hand, it is well aligned

towards the development of new therapeutics against AMR and on the other, it brings the less explored but highly potent phytocannabinoids into the fold" of AMR research.

The main reason it wasn't in the fold already? THCBD comes from cannabis, which is notorious for its intoxicating properties. As a result it hasn't been easy to collaborate on phytocannabinoid research with other institutes.

Dr. Sawant said research related to cannabis comes up against legal constraints and the need to adhere to specific regulations when studying this plant. For example, Section 20 of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act 1985 restricts the use of cannabis and doesn't make exceptions for research.

"The pioneering cannabis research project aims to catalyse policy transition at a national level by advocating for a unified national policy for cannabis research," said Zabeer Ahmed, director of CSIR-IIIM Jammu.

"By highlighting the anti-bacterial nature of cannabis, the project will go a long way towards circumventing the taboo around it, and transform it into a valuable resource."

### What next for THCBD?

Pankaj Singh Cham, lead author of the study, said the group is "eager to explore collaborations to speed up our progress."

"Establishing a framework and transportation agreement is important. Currently, many universities lack approval to conduct research on the plant, and efforts are underway to secure government authorisation," he added.

"The study recently published by Dr Singh's research group ... has presented a unique set of molecules that could be a game-changer in tackling AMR-related problems," Dr Sawant said. "It is found to

have the ability to be a good preclinical candidate, which needs further fine-tuning as far as its drug likeness is concerned."

He added that addressing the solubility challenge of THCBD could be a "viable strategy", in addition to conducting a comprehensive safety profile assessment, to pave the way for its use as a drug.

### What is the solubility challenge?

Solubility is an important consideration for a drug. For example, many antibiotics are administered orally. Before their active ingredients can be absorbed at a specific site in the body, the drug will need to dissolve in an aqueous solution. If it doesn't dissolve properly, the body won't be able to absorb it as intended.

Among other things, solubility is influenced by the properties of the solvent. For example, a molecule can be too hydrophilic (water-loving) or lipophilic (fat-loving), Dr Singh explained. In a biological system, the cytoplasm - which fills the inside of a cell - is a gelatinous liquid and the cell's wall is primarily composed of lipids.

A drug molecule in this milieu should be neither too hydrophilic nor too lipophilic but in between. THCBD "leans slightly towards lipophilicity", according to Dr Singh. Achieving this "drug-like" balance is crucial for it to be appropriately soluble.

"In our upcoming efforts, we aim to enhance these properties," he said.

Finally, the researchers' work on cannabis will "yield significant contributions to the healthcare system," Dr Ahmed added, "but will also directly benefit J&K by establishment of related industries that will create a sustainable demand for jobs."

(Hirra Azmat is a freelance journalist based in Jammu & Kashmir.)



The world's largest iceberg, named A23a, seen in Antarctica on January 14. AFP

## World's biggest iceberg battered by waves as it heads north

Agence France-Presse

It was impossible to see through the snow and fog on the Antarctic seas but expedition leader Ian Strachan knew his ship was approaching a true behemoth: the world's biggest iceberg lay somewhere ahead.

"Then the clouds lifted and we could see this expansive – almost abstract – white line that extended each way across the horizon," he said.

As the ship got closer during its visit on Sunday, huge gaping crevasses and beautiful blue arches sculpted into the

**The iceberg named A23a is nearly more than twice the size of Greater London. After decades stuck to the Antarctic ocean floor, it is now heading north on what could be its final journey**

edge of the iceberg came into focus.

Waves up to four metres high "smashed" and "battered" its wall, breaking off small chunks and collapsing some arches, Dr. Strachan said.

The tooth-shaped iceberg named A23a is nearly 4,000 sq. km across, making it more than twice the size of Greater London.

After three decades stuck to the Antarctic ocean floor, A23a is now heading north on what could be its final journey.

It contains an estimated one trillion tonnes of freshwater that is likely to melt off into the ocean along the way.

The iceberg, which is up to 400 metres thick in places, is currently drifting between Elephant Island and the South Orkney islands.

Dr. Strachan was speaking to AFP as his ship, run by the expeditions firm EYOS, was wrapping up a private tour of the Antarctic Peninsula.

It had been planning to go to South Georgia island but due to a bird flu outbreak there, it visited A23a instead.

It was not the first ship to witness the majesty of the iceberg.

A23a first broke off the Antarctic coast in 1986, making it the world's oldest iceberg as well as its largest.

But it quickly became stuck to the ocean floor, where it languished for decades.

Andrew Fleming of the British Antarctic Survey said in 2020 he saw satellite images suggesting it was "wobbling".

Then late last year, A23a broke free from its icy shackles and started venturing north.

Whether or not this was caused by climate change – winter Antarctic sea ice reached its lowest level on record last year – remains an open question.

Dr. Fleming emphasised these icebergs are a natural process, adding that one or two big ones break off every year.

But he emphasised such icebergs are "part of a huge system that is changing dramatically".

Since breaking free, A23a has followed roughly the same path as previous massive icebergs, A68 and A76, moving past the east side of the Antarctica Peninsula through the Weddell Sea.

As the iceberg is "ejected out into the Southern Ocean", warmer waters and bigger waves will start to break it up, Dr. Fleming added.

For feedback and suggestions for 'Science', please write to science@thehindu.co.in with the subject 'Daily page'.

## THE SCIENCE QUIZ

### The P v. NP problem

Vasudevan Mukunth

#### QUESTION 1

The P v. NP problem asks whether all problems whose solutions can be verified in some time can also be solved in a comparable length of time. What is this length of time called for the purpose of this problem?

#### QUESTION 2

There is another length of time called \_\_\_\_\_. Whereas the answer to Q1 denotes a length that depends on the size S of the input problem raised to some power (e.g. S<sup>2</sup>), the answer to Q2 is a length proportional to an integer raised to the input size (e.g. 2<sup>S</sup>). As S increases, 2<sup>S</sup> will increase faster than S<sup>2</sup>. Fill in the blank.

#### QUESTION 3

Name the Colorado-based private foundation that offers a million dollars as cash prize each to the solutions of seven unsolved problems – one of which is the P v. NP problem.

#### QUESTION 4

The solution to the P v. NP problem has significant consequences for cryptography. For example, the algorithm to encrypt information takes advantage of the fact that it is very difficult to identify the prime number factors of a very large number within a certain amount of time. Fill in the blank.

#### Answers to January 18 quiz:

1. Temperature at which all solids

start to glow a dim red

**Ans: Draper point**

2. Temperature at which a substance spontaneously catches fire

**Ans: Kindling temperature**

3. Entity as a result of which at 3.6 trillion K, objects double in mass –

**Ans: Special theory of relativity**

4. Element whose fusion succeeds

neon fusion because of its stability –

**Ans: Oxygen**

5. Temperature above which hadronic matter boils –

**Ans: Hagedorn temperature**

Visual: Wolf-Rayet

First contact: K.N. Viswanathan |

Pranatha M. Prabhakar | Shamim

Mondal | Binu Daniel



Visual: This American mathematician wrote in 1955 to the U.S. National Security Agency that he believed solving a sufficiently complicated problem would consume a lot more time than verifying the solution. Name him. ECONOMICFORUM (CC BY-SA 3.0)

# Text & Context

THE HINDU

## NEWS IN NUMBERS

**The farmers who committed suicide in Marathwada in 2023**

**1,088** Of these suicides in the eight districts of

Marathwada in Maharashtra, Beed had the highest, with 269 such deaths. The figure has gone up by 65 compared to 2022. PTI

**The amount sought by the UN to help migrating people**

**7.9** in \$ billion. The International Organization for Migration is launching its first "global appeal," seeking to help people on the move and ensure smoother pathways to migration. AP

**The number of people trapped after a landslide in China**

**47** At least two people were killed and over 40 others went missing after a landslide struck southwest China's mountainous Yunnan province. Over 500 residents were evacuated from the landslide-hit area. PTI

**Afghans who returned from Pakistan, as per the IOM**

**5** in lakh. Many Afghans fled Pakistan between September 15, 2023 and January 13, 2024, since Islamabad ordered undocumented migrants to leave or face arrest. Most returned before the November 1 exit deadline. AFP

**Women voters outnumber men in Manipur**

**67,028** more women. The final electoral roll shows that 20.26 lakh electors have registered. PTI

COMPILED BY THE HINDU DATA TEAM

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## On equal access to benefits for all SCs

Why has a high-level committee been formed post Prime Minister Narendra Modi's promise to the Madiga community in Telangana? What has the community been demanding since 1994? Can Parliament sub-categorise castes within the Scheduled Castes?

### EXPLAINER

#### Abhinav Lakshman

##### The story so far:

The Union government has formed a high-level committee of secretaries, chaired by the Cabinet Secretary, to evaluate and work out a method for the equitable distribution of benefits, schemes and initiatives to the most backward communities among the over 1,200 Scheduled Castes (SCs) across the country, that have been crowded out by relatively forward and dominant ones.

**Why this committee and why now?** This committee's formation is the result of a meeting Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired in December, 2023, weeks after promising to look into the demand for sub-categorisation of Scheduled Castes as raised by the Madiga community in Telangana in the run-up to the Assembly elections there last year. The Madiga community constitutes at least 50% of the SC population in Telangana, where SCs comprise around 15% of the total population (2011 Census). For decades, the Madiga community has said that despite their numbers, they are crowded out of government benefits meant for SCs, including reservation, by the Mala community – another SC – which is dominant and relatively forward.

Like the Madiga community, SC communities in several States have said that they have been routinely crowded out of benefits meant for SCs by dominant and relatively forward communities in their category. Commissions formed by State and Union governments have also supported the argument that several SC communities often miss out on benefits. As a result, multiple States like Punjab, Bihar, and Tamil Nadu have tried to bring in reservation laws at the State level in a bid to sub-categorise SCs and decide on a separate quantum of reservation for these subcategories within the umbrella of SCs –



**Equitable access:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi greets Madiga Reservation Porata Samithi leader Manda Krishna Madiga at the Parade Grounds in Hyderabad, on November 11, 2023. NAGARA GOPAL

all of which are held up in courts.

Consequently, this high-level panel of Secretaries has been formed with a strict mandate to look into "other ways of taking care of their grievances". While the committee's formation comes on the heels of the PM's promise to the Madiga community, sources have told *The Hindu* that its "scope is larger than just one community in one State as it will be looking at ways to address similar issues faced by similarly-placed SC communities across the country".

Meanwhile, a seven-judge Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court is expected to soon start hearing the matter of whether sub-categorisation of SCs and STs is at all permissible.

##### What will the panel do?

The Committee will consist of Secretaries

from the Home Ministry, the Law Ministry, the Tribal Affairs Ministry, the Social Justice Ministry and the Department of Personnel and Training in addition to the Cabinet Secretary. With the question of breaking up the SC quota off the table, the panel will look into ways in which benefits of other government schemes and initiatives can be focused towards these SC communities. This includes ways to design special initiatives for communities that need it and focusing existing programmes and schemes towards them to ensure a more even distribution of benefits. While it has not been given a specific deadline, the committee has been asked to present its findings at the earliest.

The panel will have to figure out on what basis SC communities are going to be shortlisted for special attention, find

out the extent to which special initiatives need to be designed for each of them, and then find a way to deliver them. While sources have indicated that the panel has been instructed not to veer off into the question of breaking up the SC quota, nothing prevents it from forming an opinion on this matter for the government's consideration, if necessary.

##### Have there been attempts in the past?

The demand of the Madigas was raised as early as 1994, which led to the Union government seeking legal options to do the same in 2005. At the time, the erstwhile Attorney General of India had opined that the sub-categorisation of Scheduled Castes was possible and that the Constitution could be amended to bring this about. But he had also stressed that this could happen only if there was "unimpeachable evidence to indicate a necessity" for it – suggesting that there needs to be a mechanism to gather empirical evidence to prove the necessity of sub-categorisation.

At the time, both the National Commissions for Scheduled Castes (NCSC) and Scheduled Tribes (NCST) had opposed the move to amend the Constitution, arguing that just setting aside a quota within the quota would not be enough and that making sure existing schemes and benefits reach them on priority basis was more urgent. However, even the NCST and NCSC had in 2005 maintained that nothing in the Constitution's Articles 341 and 342 explicitly prevented Parliament from sub-categorising SCs and STs.

These Articles vest the powers of notifying SC and ST lists with the President of India and of creating the lists with Parliament, with no specific instruction as to whether there can be sub-categorisation within these lists respectively. In fact, the Commissions had gone one step ahead and argued that Article 16(4) of the Constitution of India already provided for States to create special provisions for any backward classes it felt was under-represented.

### THE GIST

▼ The Union government has formed a high-level committee of secretaries to evaluate and work out a method for the equitable distribution of benefits to the most backward communities among the over 1,200 Scheduled Castes.

▼ The Madiga community constitutes at least 50% of the SC population in Telangana. For decades, the Madiga community has said that despite their numbers, they are crowded out of government benefits meant for SCs, including reservation, by the Mala community – another SC – which is dominant and relatively forward.

▼ The erstwhile Attorney General of India had opined that the sub-categorisation of Scheduled Castes was possible and that the Constitution could be amended to bring this about.

### THE GIST

▼ Through the FCRA, the ministry regulates foreign donations to ensure that such funds do not adversely affect the country's internal security. It is compulsory to register under the Act, if an association, group or NGO intends to receive foreign donations.

▼ The FCRA registration of two prominent non-governmental organisations (NGOs) – Centre for Policy Research (CPR) and World Vision India (WVI) have been cancelled this month.

▼ The MHA alleged that CPR diverted foreign donations to fund "protests and legal battles against developmental projects". It alleged that the think tank engaged in production of current affairs programmes which violated FCRA norms. CPR had furnished a report on air pollution – "Overview on the Commission for Air Quality Management Act 2021, policy challenges for the new government etc." The MHA said publishing of current affairs programme using foreign funds is prohibited under Section 3 of the FCRA.

CPR said that the ministry's decision is incomprehensible and disproportionate, and some of the reasons given challenge the very basis of the functioning of a research institution. "This includes the publication on our website of policy reports emanating from our research being equated with current affairs programming," CPR said. The registration of WVI was cancelled for alleged FCRA violations from 2012-13 to 2020-21. WVI is the recipient of the highest amount of foreign donations among all NGOs registered under the Act in 1986.

## Why was FCRA registration for several NGOs cancelled?

Who oversees the Foreign Contribution Regulation Act? How many NGOs have been affected?

### Vijaita Singh

##### The story so far:

The Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 2010 (FCRA) registration of two prominent non-governmental organisations (NGOs) – Centre for Policy Research (CPR) and World Vision India (WVI) have been cancelled this month.

##### Who monitors the process?

The Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) monitors the implementation of the FCRA. The registration of thousands of NGOs was due for renewal in 2020-2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the amendments to the FCRA Act in 2020, many NGOs could not complete the process. The MHA had given a relief up to September 30, 2021 to NGOs whose registration was expiring between September 29, 2020 and September 30, 2021 to apply for a renewal. The MHA has extended the deadline multiple times; the latest date being March 31, 2024.

Through the FCRA, the ministry regulates foreign donations to ensure that such funds do not adversely affect the country's internal security. It is compulsory to register under the Act, first enacted in 1976, if an association, group or NGO intends to receive foreign donations. The 1976 Act was repealed and replaced with a new legislation in 2010. It was further amended in 2020. The registration is valid for five years, after which the NGO has to apply for a renewal. It is mandatory for all such NGOs to register under the FCRA, initially valid for five years that can be renewed if it complies with all norms. Registered groups can receive foreign contribution for social, educational, religious, economic and cultural programmes.

**How many have lost registration?** Since 2015, the FCRA registration of more than 16,000 NGOs have been cancelled on account of "violation." As on January 22, there were 16,989 FCRA-registered NGOs active in the country. The FCRA

registration of nearly 6,000 NGOs had ceased to operate from January 1, 2022 as the MHA either refused to renew their application or the NGOs did not apply.

A 2012 report by the MHA said that there are over 20 lakh registered NGOs in the country and the number of such NGOs registered under FCRA will be less than 2%. "While it is not proper to make sweeping generalisations, it is necessary to note that the NGO sector in India is vulnerable to the risks of money laundering and terrorist financing. Therefore, necessary steps for rigorous enforcement as well as coordination with foreign countries for law enforcement will continue," the report said. In 2023, a record number of 1,111 associations were granted fresh registration. Analysis of the data showed that nearly half of fresh FCRA registrations under the religious category are for Christian NGOs. The MHA informed the Lok Sabha on December 19, 2023 that out of the total 1,615 applications received for registration under FCRA in 2021 and 2022, as many as

722 applications were granted clearance while 225 applications were rejected.

The ministry said that a total of 13,520 associations received ₹55,741.51 crore foreign contribution in the financial years 2019-2020, 2020-21 and 2021-22.

##### Why were CPR and WVI's registrations cancelled?

The MHA alleged that CPR diverted foreign donations to fund "protests and legal battles against developmental projects" and misused funds to "affect India's economic interests." It alleged that the think tank engaged in production of current affairs programmes which violated FCRA norms. CPR had furnished a report on air pollution – "Overview on the Commission for Air Quality Management Act 2021, policy challenges for the new government etc."

The MHA said publishing of current affairs programme using foreign funds is prohibited under Section 3 of the FCRA. CPR said that the ministry's decision is incomprehensible and disproportionate, and some of the reasons given challenge the very basis of the functioning of a research institution. "This includes the publication on our website of policy reports emanating from our research being equated with current affairs programming," CPR said. The registration of WVI was cancelled for alleged FCRA violations from 2012-13 to 2020-21. WVI is the recipient of the highest amount of foreign donations among all NGOs registered under the Act in 1986.

**ABSTRACT**

**Daily toil:** Tribal women farmers prepare the field before planting vegetable saplings in Nabarangapur district's Raighar area in south Odisha. BISWARANJAN ROUT

## Intersectionality of gender and caste in women's participation in the labour force

This paper is a comprehensive exploration of gender and caste dynamics in India's labour market that delves deep into the challenges faced by women in the workplace, particularly those from the lower castes

### Rebecca Rose Varghese

Kadam, Ashay and Sarkar, Kingshuk, 'The Role of Gender and Caste in Accessing Livelihood Opportunities in India', Vol 58, Issue no. 51, *Economic and Political Weekly*, December 23, 2023

Over the past two decades, there has been a significant decline in female Labour Force Participation (LFP), in line with an overall reduction in labour force engagement. Structural rigidities in India's manufacturing and service sectors have restricted employment opportunities in the informal sector, where a substantial 90% of the workforce is involved. When compounded with gender bias and caste discrimination, women often find themselves situated at the bottom of the labour pyramid, which limits their employment choices primarily to the agricultural or the informal sector.

While many papers have discussed and traced the decline in female LFP in the country, through the lens of caste, the results of the studies have been conflicting. Many scholars have discussed the importance of education for women to access employment. It is women from higher castes, due to their economic condition, that have historically had a higher chance to access education, translating into better employment. There have also been studies that reveal how women from lower castes opted for public sector jobs, due to reservation. On the other hand, many scholars have also pointed out how women from the upper castes have the lowest work participation rates, with female LFP increasing as we go down the caste hierarchy. This has been attributed to economic instability among the lower castes, which pushes women into the labour market.

### The methodology

Ashay Kadam and Kingshuk Sarkar extend

these arguments to look at how women's participation in the rural informal sector changes according to their caste positions. Further, the paper explores whether women from lower castes have higher participation in informal activities in depressed labour market conditions which offer limited social mobility to women in any given scenario.

Data from the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011 is utilised to scrutinise and analyse the labour force participation at the tehsil level in selected States including Bihar, Haryana, Maharashtra, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

The paper attempts to understand what influences women's involvement in revenue-generating non-farm economic activities within the informal sector at the tehsil level. It considers variables such as the interplay between high income and the percentage of female-headed households, and low income and the proportion of lower caste households to do so. To elaborate, the authors, through an in-depth analysis, elucidate that women's LFP in the rural informal economy tends to rise under two primary conditions in the seven States. Firstly, when there is a higher number of lower caste households, and secondly, when there is a high prevalence of female-headed households. However, it is important to note a caveat in the latter scenario: the increased participation occurs predominantly when the female-headed households are economically disadvantaged.

This is because higher economic stability within households decreases the likelihood of women, even in female-headed families, to seek employment.

### The caste and gender bias

In terms of gender, there are many barriers that women face in attempting to contribute to the economic activities of

society. Societal expectations from women to primarily focus on housework and care work and manage the needs of a household, mostly prevent them from participating in the workforce. On the other side, women also face legal and economic constraints in their pursuit of employment. For instance, there are laws in many companies that prevent women from working on the night shift.

In the non-farm, informal sector that this paper focuses on, such laws do not hinder women from participating in the workforce. The authors explain that the lack of patriarchal figures in female-headed households and the need for revenue help women attain employment, even if it is in the informal sector. Despite strong social and patriarchal constraints that discriminate against women even in the informal economy, from the labour market perspective, participation of women in the informal sector is more desirable than the lack of any employment or unpaid domestic work.

In the case of lower-caste households, higher female LFP in the informal sector is explained through economic constraints and limitations in social mobility. Historically, people from the lower castes have been expected to engage in manual and domestic work irrespective of their gender. While men were expected to do heavy manual labour, women helped with domestic work in higher caste households. Thus, lower-caste women's participation in the workforce is explained through the caste structure itself.

While there is a clear caste pattern when it comes to the employment of women, where women from upper castes have lower work participation rates compared to women from the lower castes, education also plays an important role in determining the nature of work accessed by women. Lower-caste women often face economic disadvantages,

resulting in a higher share of them being illiterate. Limited educational opportunities confine them to jobs in the informal sector. However, if a woman from this background manages to pursue education beyond school, affirmative action policies from the state enable entry into the formal economy, particularly in the public sector.

Conversely, educated women from higher castes, who challenge societal norms, have greater prospects in the formal sector.

In any case, irrespective of whether it is the informal or formal economy, women's participation in the labour force is beneficial for them and the larger society. Studies show that a woman's ability to create revenue increases her capacity to make decisions for her and her family.

Moreover, education and employment are directly associated with a delayed age of marriage and the age of the first childbirth among women. Studies have also shown that when the mother is earning, the chances of a child's schooling are higher. Further, when women have control over resources, they are less susceptible to domestic violence and enjoy more mobility.

Thus, the authors explain how despite obstacles rooted in caste and gender bias, women's participation in the workforce has a favourable influence on the socio-economic fabric of society. It not only liberates women from societal and economic constraints but also contributes to shaping a more educated and enlightened future. The paper is a comprehensive exploration of gender and caste dynamics in India's labour market that delves deep into the challenges faced by women, particularly from lower castes.

These insights contribute to the previous studies that have helped in creating more inclusive policies, addressing gender and caste disparities in the Indian workforce.

## THE DAILY QUIZ

### A quiz on Salvador Dalí, one of the most acclaimed 20th century artists on his 35th death anniversary

#### V. V. Ramanan

##### QUESTION 1

Dali never got his diploma from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of San Fernando in Madrid for what controversial reason?

##### QUESTION 2

Which of Dali's celebrated works, completed in 1931, is set on the seashore of northernmost Catalonia at Cape Creus, with Mount Pani casting a shadow upon the beach, and has shadows looking like melted cheese?

##### QUESTION 3

Which fellow Spaniard, an artistic legend in his own right, is said to have given Dali a loan of \$500 needed to make his first trip to New York in 1934?

##### QUESTION 4

Dali is remembered by Alfred Hitchcock fans for his work on a dream sequence in which of the British filmmaker's works?

##### QUESTION 5

Name his Russian spouse, 10 years his senior, who was also his muse.

##### QUESTION 6

One of the bigger paintings by Dali has the Venus De Milo, a Dalmatian, and a swarm of flies. Name this work that measures 157 x 118 inches.

##### QUESTION 7

For which iconic Indian brand did Dali design limited-edition ashtrays and was gifted an elephant calf as remuneration?



##### Visual question:

Identify this painting, with a tongue twister of a name, created as a homage to Nobel Laureates Watson and Crick.

**Questions and Answers to the previous day's daily quiz:** 1. The name of the plaintiff in the Roe versus Wade case. **Ans: Norma McCorvey**

2. The plaintiff wanted an abortion in this U.S. State. **Ans: Texas**

3. The U.S. Supreme Court upheld the right to have an abortion again in this 1992 landmark decision. **Ans: Planned Parenthood versus Casey**

4. In 2022, the Court overruled the right to abortion in this case. **Ans: Dobbs versus Jackson Women's Health Organization**

5. The theory that suggests supporters of the legalisation of abortion cause the erosion of their political base. It was coined by this newspaper. **Ans: Roe Effect; The Wall Street Journal**

**Visual:** Identify the march and the city in which it is held. **Ans: March for Life; Washington DC**

**Early Birds:** Aadya Akshansh Thakur| Aaryaman Thakur



## FROM THE ARCHIVES

### Know your English

#### K. Subrahmanian

"Several readers would like to know whether the use of 'shall' in the following sentence found in a Supreme Court Judgement is correct: 'The Bench also expressed its' hope and trust that our expectations shall not be belied and the assurances which we have indicated shall be helpful'."

"'Shall' used with the second and third person implies 'obligation', 'compulsion', 'command'.

*You shall go.*

*He shall go.*

'You shall go' means 'You are ordered to go'. The use of 'shall' in this sense with the second and third person is rather archaic. However, it is not considered archaic in legal language as legal language itself is somewhat archaic. Dr. Johnson said that 'it is one of the definitions of the civil law that definitions are hazardous'. In legal language, 'shall' in the second and third person is common. All the same, it is odd to have 'hope' and 'expect' followed by 'shall'.

*I hope he will come.*

'I hope he shall come' sounds odd. Incidentally, 'hope' is not followed by 'may'. 'I hope he will come' and not 'I hope he may come'. 'Perhaps' and 'may' don't go together. 'Perhaps he will come' or 'He may come'. Don't say 'Perhaps he may come'. 'Perhaps' itself means 'it may be'. I hope my remarks on 'shall' will not invite contempt of court."

"Ms. C. S. Subha wants to know which of the following is correct: (a) look forward to hearing from you (b) looking forward to hear from you (c) looking forward to something.

*I look forward to the party.*

*I look forward to meeting him.*

*I am looking forward to his visit.*

"Mr. V. Sankaran wants to know whether it is in bad taste to say that X and Y are uterine brothers/sisters."

"'Uterine' means 'born of the same mother but not same father'. This is a technical word. This is the adjective of 'uterus', a technical term for 'womb'. These two are matter-of-fact expressions and there is nothing good or bad about them. But it would be in poor taste to ask one of the uterine brothers: 'Where is your uterine brother?'"

"Mr. S. Vanamali wants to know the difference between 'funeral' and 'Funereal'."

"'Funeral' means 'a ceremony, usually religious, of burying or burning a dead person'. It is also used as an adjective. Funeral pyre, funeral procession, funeral oration. 'Funereal' means 'appropriate to a funeral, heavy, gloomy, dismal, dark'.

*It was a wedding all right. But there was no joy. There was a funereal atmosphere.*

The 'u' in 'funereal' is pronounced like the 'u' in 'funeral'. The first 'e' and the 'ea' are pronounced like the 'ea' in 'near', 'fear'. In 'funeral', the stress is on the first syllable. In 'funereal', the stress is on the second syllable."

*Published in The Hindu on October 23, 1990.*

## Word of the day

### Orotund:

ostentatiously lofty in style; full and rich (of sound)

**Synonyms:** bombastic, declamatory, tumid, turgid, large, round, pear-shaped

**Usage:** His *orotund* voice can be heard from the hall.

**Pronunciation:** [bit.ly/orotundpro](http://bit.ly/orotundpro)

**International Phonetic Alphabet:** /oʊrəʊtʌnd/; /ɔ:/-

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